

# 2016 IMPACT REPORT



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## DEAR FRIEND OF FIRST BOOK,

In a recent survey, 74 percent of the heroic educators we serve told us that First Book helps them be the best educator they can be. What extraordinary validation that the work we are doing is reaching those who need our support.

Over the past few years, we've committed ourselves more than ever before to making member-influenced, market-driven change for children in need and the caring adults who support them. That starts with listening carefully to the circumstances kids are facing and the challenges keeping educators and program leaders up at night.

Our members – the largest and fastest growing network of educators serving children in need – have coalesced to form a powerful new market with a unified voice and purchasing power. With their feedback, and through their collective market force, we make the most needed and most wanted books, educational resources and other essentials available at the lowest possible cost. Together, we are able to make tangible change.

This year, feedback from our members revealed four nearly universal challenges in classrooms and communities across the country. Educators sought our support in:

- Fostering a lifelong love of reading;
- Teaching diversity and inclusion;
- Engaging families in their child's learning; and
- Meeting basic needs.

In this 2016 Impact Report, you'll learn more about how we collaborated, innovated and applied our social enterprise model to meet their needs. None of this would be possible without the dedicated support of individuals and organizations whose generosity and belief in our shared mission provides the fuel for our efforts. Behind our mission is a strong belief that every kid deserves an equal education. Their future depends on it – and our future depends on it.

**BEHIND OUR MISSION IS A STRONG BELIEF THAT EVERY KID DESERVES AN EQUAL EDUCATION. THEIR FUTURE DEPENDS ON IT – AND OUR FUTURE DEPENDS ON IT.**

I'm so proud of what we've built, and I'm endlessly grateful for the time, resources and great thinking you commit to delivering possibilities for children in need.

Every best wish,



Kyle Zimmer  
President, CEO and Co-founder  
First Book



# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO



# THE NEED: ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION IS NOT EQUAL

## A RECORD NUMBER OF LOW-INCOME KIDS...

More than half of U.S. public school students live in low-income households<sup>1</sup>

## LACK ACCESS TO RESOURCES...

Two-thirds of children from low-income families don't have books<sup>2</sup>

## THEN FALL BEHIND AND DON'T REACH THEIR POTENTIAL.

79% of fourth graders from low-income households do not read proficiently – a key predictor of a child's future success<sup>3</sup>

## THE IMPACT OF THIS CYCLE IS STAGGERING.

Poor educational outcomes are tied to future poverty, unemployment, illness, dependence on welfare, social exclusion and crime<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> National Center for Education Statistics, 2015   <sup>2</sup> Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 2016   <sup>3</sup> Annie E. Casey Kids Count, 2014   <sup>4</sup> World Literacy Foundation, 2012

A  
MESSAGE  
FROM

**MALIK RAY**  
**Second Grade Teacher**  
**Atlanta, GA**

**“THESE BOOKS  
HAVE GIVEN  
MY KIDS HOPE.”**



Eric J. Smith, © CBS ECO MEDIA

It started with one spelling word. “Beach.”

Malik Ray, a first-time second grade teacher in Atlanta, taught his students their new spelling words by projecting a photo and having them guess the word before putting it in their notebooks.

On this day, Malik displayed a photo of the sand, a palm tree, a little beach ball and the ocean. The classroom went silent. Not one student guessed the word.

They couldn’t recognize the sand; they didn’t know the water was the ocean. They had never seen a tree with what they called “arms.” They did recognize the ball.

This was when Malik realized that his students had never seen a beach. They had never been outside of the Vine City neighborhood where they resided. His students didn’t have what Malik calls “vision” – the ability to see past where they are now and imagine a different life.

But when 770 pounds of books from First Book arrived at their school, that changed.

“When the books arrived, I thought, ‘Here are 770 pounds of experience for your children. They are going to dream 770 pounds of dreams,’” says Malik.

Now when they read about faraway places and unfamiliar characters, they ask questions like, “How is her hair that way?” and “Why do their parents do that when mine does this?”

Students that were reading at a Pre-K level when they entered his classroom are now reading chapter books. Their reading assessment scores have improved. They are ready to enter third grade.

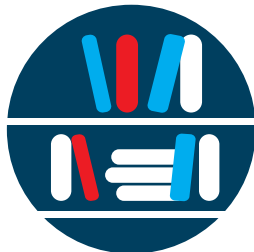
And they’ve started to dream.

“We’re starting to talk about their future in a whole new way,” explains Malik. “Rather than saying, ‘I want to be a beautician like my aunt,’ we talk about owning a beauty salon. I want them to be able to dream. These books have given my kids hope.”

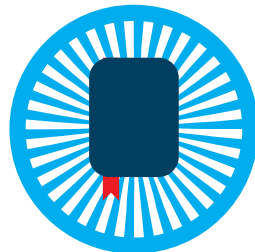
# WHO WE SERVE: EDUCATORS & KIDS



Schools



Libraries &  
Museums



Faith-Based  
Organizations



Military Family  
Support Programs



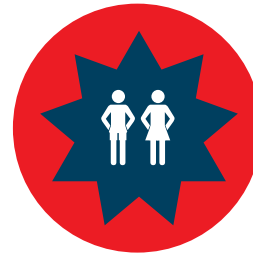
Early Childhood  
Programs



Shelters &  
Clinics



Out-of-School  
Time Programs

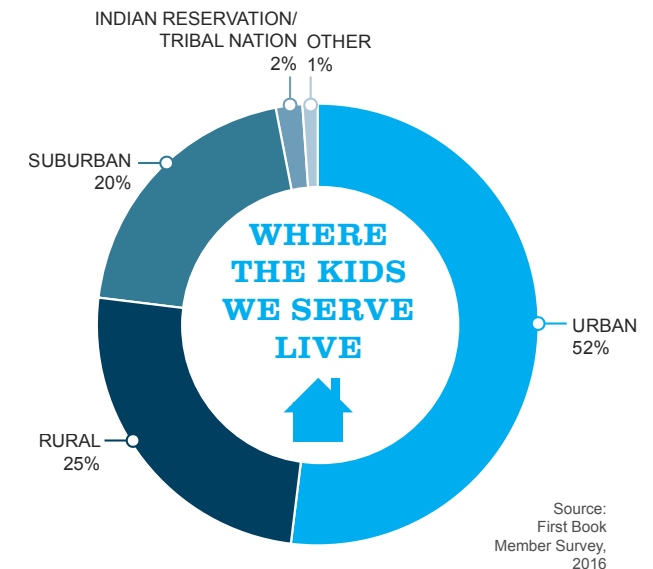
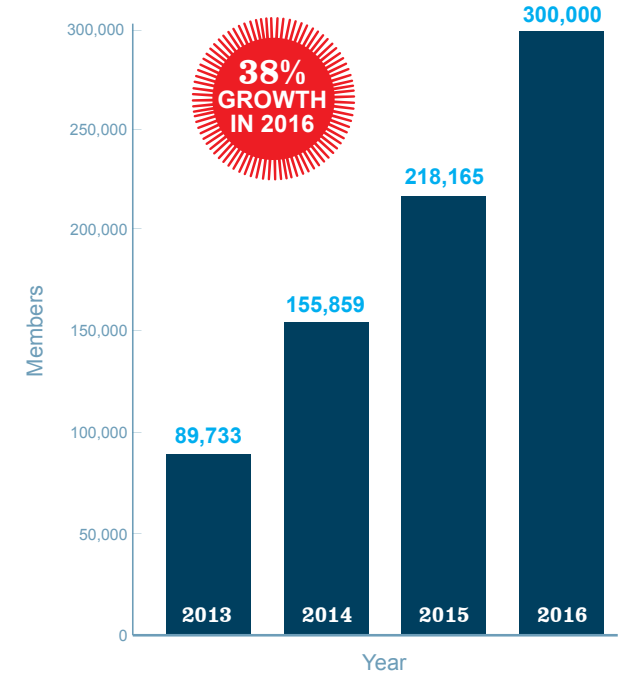


And Many  
More!

## WHO WE SERVE

First Book serves the largest and fastest-growing network of educators and program leaders working exclusively with children in need. More than 1,000 new educators sign up with First Book each week to receive books and resources.

## GROWTH OF THE FIRST BOOK NETWORK



## GET TO KNOW OUR MEMBERS



**73 percent**  
of educators are  
school-based



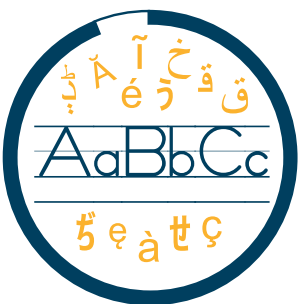
**27 percent**  
work outside of  
schools, including  
in community  
organizations,  
libraries, and  
after school  
programs



**60 percent**  
of educators  
have worked  
in education for  
11 years or more



**72 percent**  
have some years  
of post-graduate  
training



**94 percent**  
serve English  
Language  
Learners



**72 percent**  
pay out of their  
own pocket  
to acquire  
resources for  
their classroom  
and students

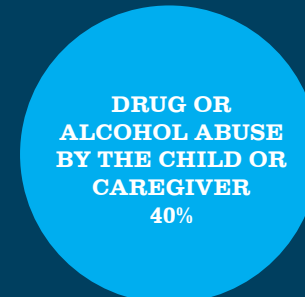
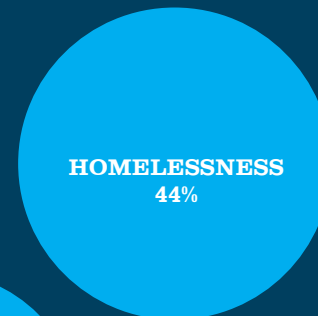
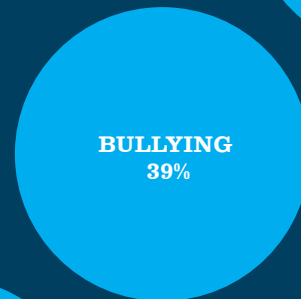
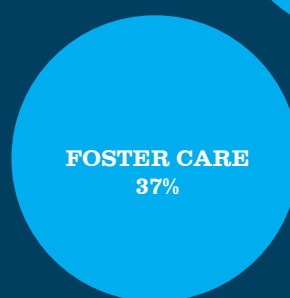
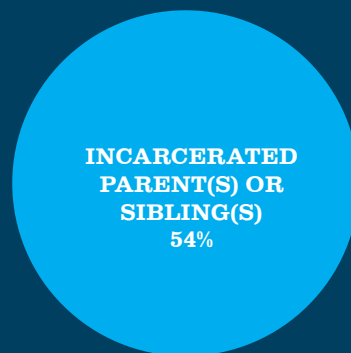
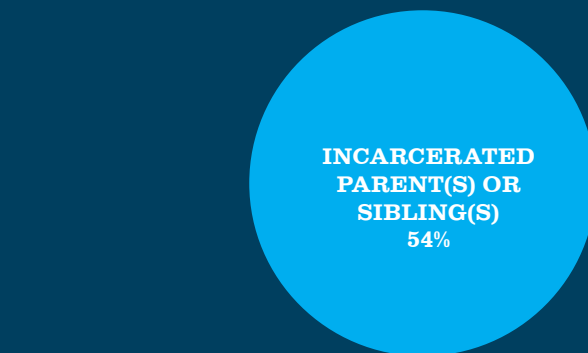
## FIRST BOOK'S REACH

- 160 million books and resources distributed in First Book's 24-year history
- 3 million children reached annually
- Distributions in 30 countries

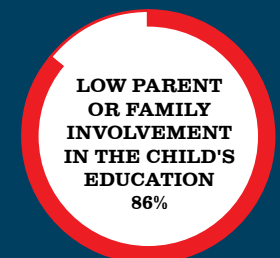
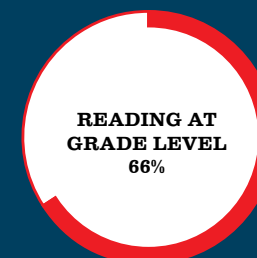
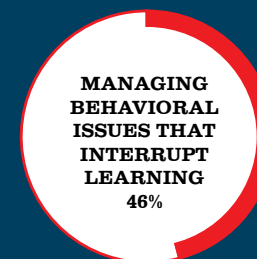
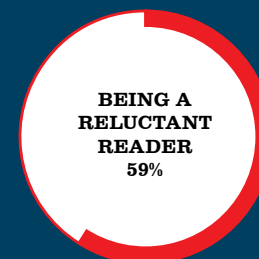


# WHO WE SERVE: EDUCATORS & KIDS

PERCENTAGE OF FIRST BOOK EDUCATORS AND PROGRAM LEADERS SURVEYED THAT SEE THE FOLLOWING LIFE CIRCUMSTANCES AS ISSUES IN THEIR CLASSROOMS AND PROGRAMS:



PERCENTAGE OF FIRST BOOK EDUCATORS AND PROGRAM LEADERS SURVEYED THAT SEE THE FOLLOWING ACADEMIC CHALLENGES AS PROMINENT IN THEIR CLASSROOMS AND PROGRAMS:





# OUR IMPACT: DELIVERING POSSIBILITIES FOR CHILDREN IN NEED

First Book listens to feedback from our members to make the books, educational resources and other essentials they need more accessible and affordable. In 2016, our educators and program leaders cited four key priorities:



Fostering a  
lifelong love  
of reading



Teaching  
diversity and  
inclusion



Engaging families  
in their child's  
learning



Meeting  
basic needs



Educators report that First Book:

- **Provides resources where there were none before:** 82% report that without First Book their children would have very few or no new books
- **Increases interest in reading:** 87% report children's increased interest in reading after receiving books from First Book
- **Helps close the achievement gap:** 88% report resources from First Book helps close the achievement gap for the kids they serve
- **Improves teacher impact:** 79% say First Book helps them be the best educator they can be

Source: First Book Member Impact Survey, 2016

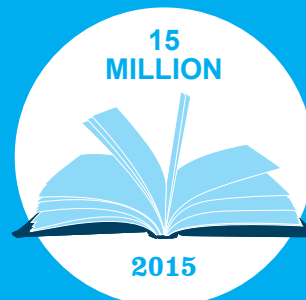
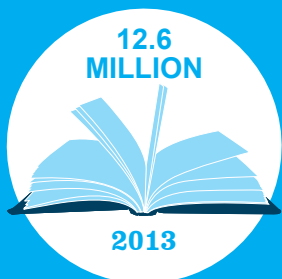
# FOSTERING A LIFELONG LOVE OF READING



**93 percent** of educators and program leaders use books from First Book to help kids develop a lifelong love of reading.

To help educators foster a lifelong love of reading in 2016, First Book:

- Created a new content category on the First Book Marketplace consisting of all the books our kids love most. The Pleasure Reading section features 850 fun and engaging titles.
- Hosted book distributions in communities across the country with support from our generous partners, including Disney, Molina Healthcare, TD Bank, Wipro, Conn's, dd's, Ford Motor Company and the American Federation of Teachers.



**FIRST BOOK PROVIDED  
18 MILLION BOOKS AND  
RESOURCES TO KIDS IN 2016**



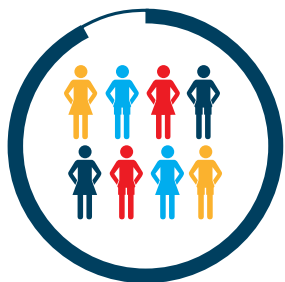
**JILL BOTTS**  
**Board of Trustees**  
**President,**  
**Los Molinos Unified**  
**School District,**  
**Los Molinos, CA**

The poverty in Jill Bott's small California community is acute. It can be hard for her students to imagine their futures when many don't even have enough to eat.

Jill and the Los Molinos Unified School District made a commitment to provide their students with five books per year. She believes that getting books into the hands of her kids is the most important job she has.

Watch Jill's story at:  
[http://bit.ly/FirstBookImpact\\_CA](http://bit.ly/FirstBookImpact_CA)

# TEACHING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



**92 percent** of First Book educators and program leaders tell us the children they serve would be more enthusiastic readers if they had access to books with characters, stories and images that reflect their lives. In 2016, First Book:

- Catalyzed the paperback publication of six children's titles featuring diverse voices. With support from Target, KPMG and JetBlue Airways, First Book made available 60,000 copies to educators serving kids in need.
- Initiated a two-year collaboration with Lee & Low Books, supported by the NEA Foundation, for the publication of a never-before-published author of color, the production of thousands of diverse books and companion tip sheets, and First Book Marketplace funding grants.
- Expanded our selection of diverse books as part of the Stories for All Project™, now comprising 30 percent of all titles on the First Book Marketplace.



**CATHY GAUDIO**  
Program Manager,  
AARP Foundation  
Experience Corps,  
Phoenix, AZ

Cathy Gaudio reads aloud to a group of students in Phoenix. The book, *Pelitos* by Sandra Cisneros, is bilingual. She reads one page in English, soon echoed by her bright-eyed helper reading the page in Spanish.

Cathy, the program manager of AARP Experience Corps Phoenix, is joined by the school's reading tutors. On this day, the students gained more than reading skills from their tutors.



"When these students can see themselves in books, they get more excited about reading," says Cathy. "There's one reference to very long hair that's shiny. After we finished reading, one little girl said, 'This is me! This is my hair!'"

The young girl's discovery created a larger conversation in the classroom.

"But this is me!" said one child. "But I have curly hair, so this is me," said another.

"At that age, they all accept each other and can find something very personal in that book," Cathy observes.

# ENGAGING FAMILIES IN THEIR CHILD'S LEARNING



**61 percent** of educators hope that the books they receive from First Book will create increased opportunities for parents and caregivers to read to their children.

To help engage families in their child's learning in 2016, First Book:

- **Launched Build Strong Families with Stories, a collection of 21 books and learning resources focused on supporting parent engagement and helping parents and caregivers create environments in which their children can thrive.**
- **Expanded our book and resource offerings on the First Book Marketplace to showcase more diverse family structures and circumstances.**
- **Invited our community of educators to share their perspectives and ideas on how to best engage parents and families with one another through a series of Twitter chats.**



**ANTWON**

**Father, Washington, D.C.**

When Antwon's kids get a little older, he plans to tell them what he's been through. A 25-year-old father of three, he's working hard to give them all a better life. He is employed as a plumber and studying to get his GED, but this is a life he never imagined.

Antwon grew up in the Woodland Terrace housing development in Washington, D.C., where many families live off an annual income of \$7,000 per year.

"My mother worked on and off. She was raising five kids. She was struggling," says Antwon. "The only thing I cared about was taking care of my family. I was 13 at the time, and I got into street life."



Years later, Antwon faced time in prison. A few weeks before returning home, Antwon realized what was most important to him – his children.

That's when Antwon connected with Smart from the Start. As a First Book partner, the nonprofit helps parents and caregivers become their child's first teacher by providing books to help break the cycle of chronic school underachievement.

"I read to them. They like the sticker books, but I read," he shares with a smile.

Learn more about First Book and Smart from the Start on our YouTube channel: [http://bit.ly/FirstBookImpact\\_DC](http://bit.ly/FirstBookImpact_DC)



# MEETING BASIC NEEDS



**79 percent** of the educators and program leaders First Book serves say the children they work with have difficulty getting basic needs met.

Books have a tremendous impact on children's lives. But kids need far more than books to learn and succeed. An overwhelming number of low-income families struggle to meet the basic needs of their children, such as providing food, shelter and clothing.

To ensure kids have everything they need to learn and thrive, in 2016, First Book expanded its resource offerings to include:

- Nonperishable food items, with support from C&S Wholesale Grocers
- Coats to ensure kids make it to school in the cold winter months
- Hygiene items to help kids stay healthy and feel confident



**CLAUDIA AVERETTE**  
Chief of Staff,  
Chester Upland School District,  
Chester, PA

"Being cold is hard to camouflage," says Claudia Averette, chief of staff of Chester Upland School District in Chester, PA.

When Claudia started her role, it was very clear to her that her students were missing something very important to their education – coats.



"When you have children coming to ask if you have something they can wear home because their jacket isn't warm enough, the need is evident," Claudia says.

As the temperature dropped, Claudia's students arrived to school without warm coats. They had no hats, no gloves and no scarves.

"When you look at the absentee rates, they go up in January and February," explains Claudia. "I believe that has a lot to do with not having adequate clothing."

First Book now offers coats so kids can make it to school and learn year-round. The coats are carefully constructed. The manufacturing is high quality, so kids receive the same quality items as their more affluent peers and don't need to worry about standing out.

Kids can play outside with friends. It's a great relief for their families.

"When children feel good about themselves, they do good by themselves," says Claudia. "When kids have a warm coat, they have a smile on their face. They sit up, they pay attention, they're more astute because they just feel good about themselves!"

# FIRST BOOK ADVANCES ITS MISSION OF EDUCATIONAL EQUITY: 2016 HIGHLIGHTS

## LIBRARY OF CONGRESS HONORS FIRST BOOK WITH DAVID M. RUBENSTEIN LITERACY AWARD

In February, the Library of Congress presented First Book with its prestigious David M. Rubenstein Prize. One of three Literacy Awards presented by the Library of Congress annually, the Rubenstein Prize is awarded to an organization that has made outstanding and measurable contributions in increasing literacy levels and has demonstrated exceptional and sustained depth and breadth in its commitment to the advancement of literacy. In addition, the award, which includes a \$150,000 cash prize, honors organizations that meet the highest standards of excellence in operations and services.



*David Rubenstein, benefactor of the 2016 Library of Congress Literacy Awards, interviews Rubenstein Prize winner Kyle Zimmer. Photo by Shawn Miller.*



## FIRST BOOK AND PARTNERS LAUNCH WHITE HOUSE'S OPEN EBOOKS INITIATIVE

First Book joined the New York Public Library and the Digital Public Library of America as a proud partner for the February launch of Open eBooks ([openebooks.net](http://openebooks.net)), an expansion of President Barack H. Obama's ConnectED Initiative. Major publishers provided \$250 million worth of eBooks, including 10,000 of their most popular titles for free to eligible classrooms and programs. The eBooks, and the Open eBooks app through which they are accessible, are available through First Book to First Book members.

## ARKANSAS, MASSACHUSETTS AND NEBRASKA WIN THE DISNEY AND FIRST BOOK “MAGIC OF STORYTELLING” STATE VOTE

Arkansas, Massachusetts and Nebraska were the top three winning states in the “Magic of Storytelling” state vote. A total of 135,000 books were awarded to classrooms and programs serving children in need in the states, with more than 1 million books being delivered in 2016 overall. The “Magic of Storytelling” campaign, which began on January 4, 2016 and ended on March 31, 2016, invited the public to cast online votes for the state where they wished books to be awarded. More than 700,000 votes were cast, representing all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Additionally, numerous ABC-affiliate stations in cities across the country donated 1,000 or more books to schools and organizations in their local communities. The 2016 “Magic of Storytelling” campaign was the fourth annual collaboration between First Book, Disney Publishing Worldwide and the Disney|ABC Television Group, significantly furthering Disney’s work to put new books into the hands of children in low-income communities across the country.



## KYLE ZIMMER RECEIVES MS. FOUNDATION AWARD FOR IGNITING CULTURE CHANGE

In April, the Ms. Foundation for Women honored Kyle Zimmer with the 2016 Peggy Charren/Free to Be Award, provided to individuals in media whose work contributes to breaking through gender and racial lines. The award was presented by Marlo Thomas, Ms. Foundation co-founder and author of *Free to Be You and Me*, as part of the Ms. Foundation's Gloria Awards. Named after Ms. Foundation co-founder Gloria Steinem, the Gloria Awards honor grassroots women activists, innovators and philanthropists who ignite policy and culture change on behalf of women, families and communities nationwide.



Monica Schipper, © Getty

First Book President and CEO Kyle Zimmer with Marlo Thomas, Gloria Steinem and Teresa C. Younger at the Ms. Foundation For Women 2016 Gloria Awards Gala.



## FIRST BOOK MARKETPLACE REDESIGN BOOSTS ECOMMERCE EXPERIENCE AND IMPACT FOR EDUCATORS

In May, First Book re-launched the First Book Marketplace, its award-winning nonprofit ecommerce platform providing ongoing access to affordable, high-quality, new books, learning materials and basic needs items ([fbmarketplace.org](http://fbmarketplace.org) and [fbmpcanada.org](http://fbmpcanada.org)). Specially-curated to address the needs of children from low-income families, the re-tooled website now features powerful search and navigation functions, expedited processing speed, shared knowledge from educators regarding how they use First Book resources, collections on popular topics such as family engagement, character development and health and wellness, as well as free resources.



## FIRST BOOK, TARGET TEAM UP TO BRING NEW SPORTS EQUIPMENT TO FURTHER WELLNESS AND LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN NEED

In August, First Book received funding to add sports and fitness equipment to the wide range of resources available to programs and schools serving children in need, thanks to support from Target, as part of the retailer's "Get Active" program. In addition, because many schools and programs have no budgets for school resources, funding from Target also provided credits that educators could use to access sports equipment on the First Book Marketplace.

## FIRST BOOK, NEA FOUNDATION BRING THOUSANDS OF DIVERSE BOOKS, RESOURCES TO CHILDREN IN NEED

In September, the NEA Foundation and publisher Lee & Low Books joined forces with First Book to expand the Stories for All Project™, First Book's groundbreaking initiative to increase the diversity in children's books. The new two-year collaboration, supported with funding from the NEA Foundation, includes the publication of a brand new book by a never-before-published author of color, the production of thousands of diverse books and companion tip sheets and supplemental funding for educators working with children from low-income families.



## FIRST BOOK AND PIZZA HUT PARTNER TO LAUNCH PIZZA HUT: THE LITERACY PROJECT

In September, First Book and Pizza Hut partnered to launch *Pizza Hut: The Literacy Project*, a global campaign to transform the lives of kids through literacy and reading. To kick off the program, Pizza Hut, First Book and TV star Rico Rodriguez distributed books to 100 second and third graders in New York City.



**THE  
LITERACY  
PROJECT**



## **“HEALTHY MIND, HEALTHY BODY” INITIATIVE PROVIDES CUSTOM EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES TO ADDRESS SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING**

In November, Molina Healthcare, a national health care organization, and First Book launched a partnership to advance social and emotional wellness for children in need – an area identified by First Book’s membership of educators and program leaders as a top health education priority, exceeding the need to address nutrition, positive body image and even substance abuse. The “Healthy Mind, Healthy Body” initiative is a comprehensive effort to support educators serving kids in need with new resources focused on social and emotional development in young children. The resources were developed with the support of the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), a nonprofit organization committed to integrating evidence-based social and emotional learning into all grade levels.



## **THE CITIZEN POWER PROJECT: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

In November, First Book, the American Federation of Teachers and the Albert Shanker Institute presented educators nationwide with a challenge: identify an issue and a civic engagement project important to their students, school or community, and describe how their students could take action with the support of books and resources from First Book.



We called this challenge The Citizen Power Project. Funded by the Aspen Institute’s Pluribus Project, 15 proposals – five each from elementary, middle and high schools – were chosen to receive resources and a \$500 grant for use on the First Book Marketplace. The students spent the year learning that they could catalyze change and make a difference.

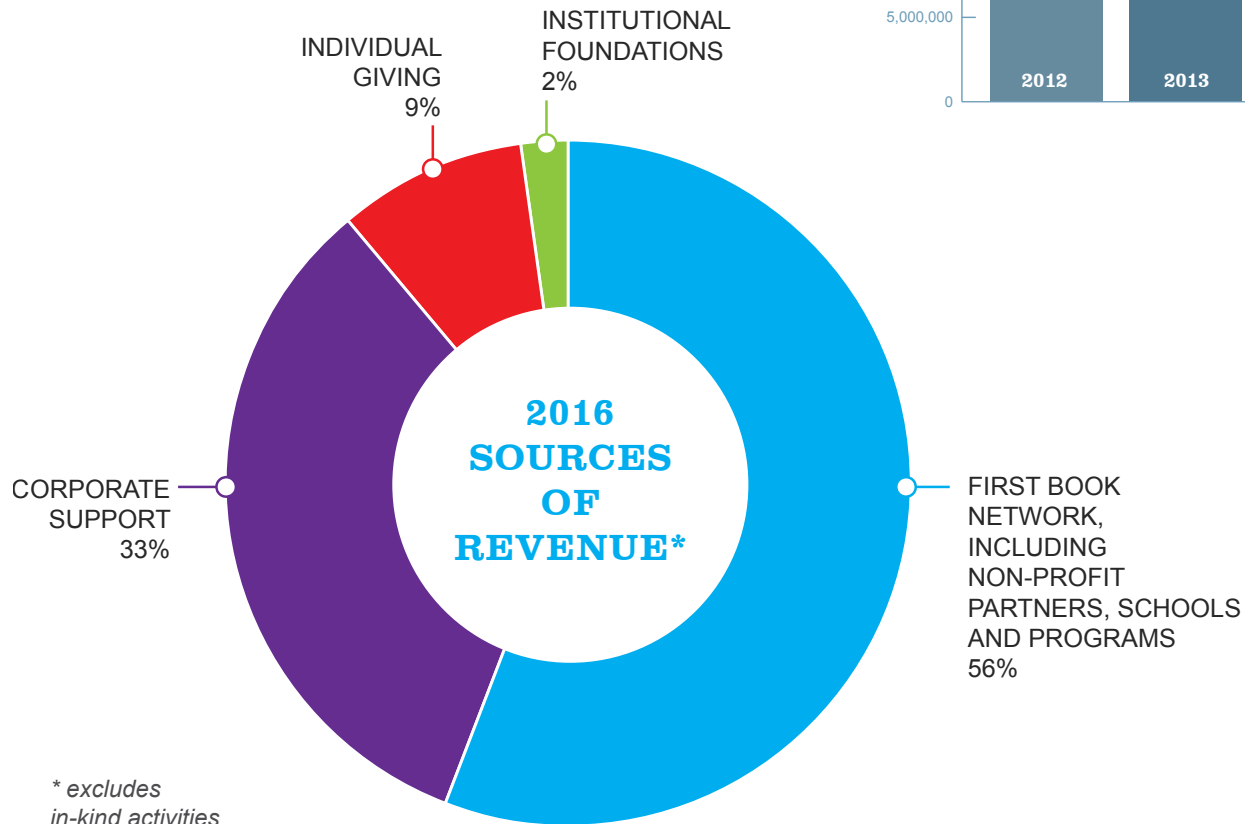
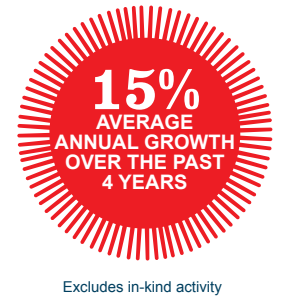
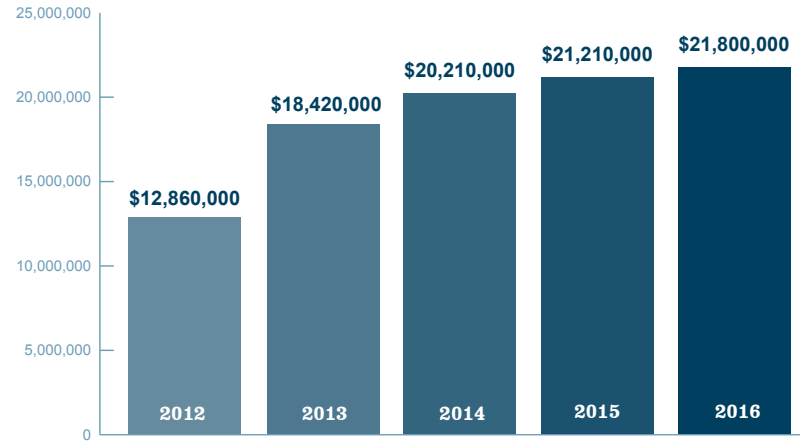


## **DR. SEUSS ENTERPRISES AND RANDOM HOUSE CHILDREN’S BOOKS ANNOUNCE FIRST BOOK AS ELECTION WINNER!**

In conjunction with the launch of *One Vote, Two Votes, I Vote, You Vote*; Dr. Seuss’s beloved character the Cat in the Hat declared his candidacy for president of the United States at CatInHat4Prez.com. The Cat ran as the Kids’ Candidate, teaching kids that every vote counts and every voice matters. Votes were cast across America for the Cat in the Hat to work with one of his supporters and their selected charitable cause. When the ballots were counted in December, First Book was the winner, and the recipient of a \$10,000 grant from Random House Children’s Books and Dr. Seuss Enterprises!

# FINANCIALS

## 2012-2016 REVENUE GROWTH



First Book receives the highest rating from Charity Navigator

<b>BALANCE SHEET</b> Amounts in 000's	<b>2016 Actuals</b>	<b>2015 Actuals</b>	<b>2014 Actuals</b>
Cash and Equivalents	\$6,716	\$5,881	\$5,419
Accounts Receivable	899	853	658
Other Assets	163	140	185
Property and Equipment, net	119	70	61
Inventory, Purchased	2,879	3,722	3,239
Inventory, Donated	33,799	31,863	25,510
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$44,575</b>	<b>\$42,529</b>	<b>\$35,072</b>
Accounts Payable	1,927	2,431	2,002
Pension Payable	237	223	229
Accrued Expenses	165	136	142
Line of Credit	580	-	-
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$2,909</b>	<b>\$2,790</b>	<b>\$2,373</b>
Net Assets, Unrestricted	5,555	6,535	5,572
Net Assets, Unrestricted - Donated Inventory	33,799	31,863	25,510
Net Assets, Temporarily Restricted	2,312	1,341	1,617
Net Assets, Permanently Restricted	-	-	-
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$41,666</b>	<b>\$39,739</b>	<b>\$32,669</b>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>\$44,575</b>	<b>\$42,529</b>	<b>\$35,072</b>

<b>STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES</b> Amounts in 000's	<b>2016 Actuals</b>	<b>2015 Actuals</b>	<b>2014 Actuals</b>
Contributions, Donated Goods and Services	\$115,567	\$115,185	\$74,635
Contributions, Cash-Based Revenues	21,771	21,199	20,210
Other Revenues, net	30	8	(2)
<b>Total Support and Revenue</b>	<b>\$137,368</b>	<b>\$136,392</b>	<b>\$94,843</b>
Program Services	131,881	126,285	97,333
Management and General	2,493	2,102	1,966
Fundraising	1,067	965	966
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$135,441</b>	<b>\$129,352</b>	<b>\$100,265</b>
Change in Net Assets, Cash-Based Activities	(9)	687	52
Change in Net Assets, Donated Activities	1,936	6,353	(5,474)
<b>Net Assets, Beginning of Year</b>	<b>\$39,739</b>	<b>\$32,699</b>	<b>\$38,121</b>
<b>Net Assets, End of Year</b>	<b>\$41,666</b>	<b>\$39,739</b>	<b>\$32,699</b>

Information based on 2014, 2015 and 2016 audited financials.

The "Change in Net Assets – Donated Activities" is a non-cash item and simply reflects the timing of donated inventory received in one fiscal year and distributed to eligible programs in a subsequent fiscal year.

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\*As of November 21, 2017



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