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“The Very Hungry Caterpillar” Helps Cheerios® Create a Hunger for Books!

Cheerios Teams Up with Children’s Book Author, Illustrator **Eric Carle** to Launch a Special Illustrated Box, Online Book Donation Challenge and *Give a Child a Book Week* – June 10 – 16, 2007

Cheerios to distribute 100,000 copies of Carle’s “The Tiny Seed” to kids in need across country

MINNEAPOLIS (Spring 2007) – As part of the fifth annual Cheerios® Spoonfuls of Stories® program, **Cheerios is teaming up with internationally respected children’s book author and illustrator Eric Carle to launch “Give a Child a Book Week,” June 10 through 16, 2007 ~ and to feature a specially illustrated Cheerios cereal box showcasing some of Carle’s beloved storybook characters.** Cheerios and nonprofit partner First Book® are also launching an online children’s book trivia and book donation challenge that will help determine where Cheerios will donate 100,000 copies of Carle’s book, *The Tiny Seed*.

Cheerios printed five million of the Eric Carle-illustrated boxes, featured on the 20-ounce size of Cheerios® cereal boxes, which are expected to be on shelves starting in March 2007 through early summer or while supplies last. This is the first time that Cheerios has introduced a specially illustrated cereal box with children’s book illustrations. The boxes, which feature Carle’s popular “The Very Hungry Caterpillar,” “Brown Bear,” and “The Grouchy Ladybug,” also include information about the Cheerios online book donation challenge, developed with First Book. The online quiz allows families to test their knowledge of popular children’s books by answering trivia questions. It’s easy to play: just go to www.FirstBook.org/carle, answer the trivia questions, and then vote for the state that you want to receive copies of *The Tiny Seed*. For every trivia question answered correctly, you can cast one vote for the state of your choice. The five states that receive the most votes from now through *Give a Child a Book Week* will receive 20,000 copies of the book, to be distributed to nonprofit groups that support children in need.

During *Give a Child a Book Week*, developed as a reminder to get books to kids to support summer reading, families can help get more books to children by sharing their favorite book with

a child; voting in the online book trivia challenge for which states should receive a gift of books; and making financial contributions to programs like First Book or other nonprofits that get books to children.

“We are thrilled to expand our Spoonfuls of Stories program with this year’s *Give a Child a Book Week*, encouraging everyone to get more books to children,” said Ricardo Fernandez, marketing manager for Cheerios. “Our primary focus with Spoonfuls of Stories has always been to get high quality, award-winning books in the hands of children, and to encourage parents and children to enjoy the wonders of reading together. By giving families the opportunity to help us distribute 100,000 copies of Eric Carle’s wonderful book, *The Tiny Seed*, through the online book trivia challenge, we hope to nurture children’s enthusiasm for books, while also planting a seed on the importance of reading with children.”

“I am delighted to help support this program to show the importance that books play in the lives of children,” said **Eric Carle**. “And, I hope people will enjoy seeing characters from some of my favorite books on boxes of Cheerios cereal.”

The Tiny Seed, published by Simon & Schuster Children’s Publishing, is just one of many beloved books by Carle. Using brightly colored, painted tissue papers to create instantly recognizable collage illustrations, author and illustrator Carle (www.eric-carle.com) has been nurturing children’s imaginations for more than 40 years with his stories. His best-known work, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, has sold more than 25 million copies and has been translated into more than 35 languages. Carle has illustrated more than 70 books (many of which he also wrote) and sold more than 77 million copies of his books worldwide. The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art, (www.picturebookart.org), the first museum of its kind in this country, opened its doors in Amherst, Mass., in 2002. Since then it has welcomed more than 250,000 visitors. The 40,000 square-foot museum features three galleries showing rotating exhibitions of picture book art, a hands-on art studio, and a reading library.

Last fall through spring 2007, Cheerios gave away more than five million books free in boxes of Cheerios cereal. Cheerios also worked with First Book to donate a year’s worth of books to each child participating in one of 50 selected reading programs across the country.

Over the past five years, Cheerios, through the Spoonfuls of Stories program, has donated more than \$2 million to First Book (www.firstbook.org), and has given more than 25 million books to children inside boxes of Cheerios cereal. For more information, see www.cheerios.com.

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ABOUT CHEERIOS

Cheerios, America’s No. 1 cereal, debuted in 1941 as Cheerioats. The nation’s first ready-to-eat oat cereal has since become one of the most trusted and recognized brands in America. In fact, one of every 10 boxes of cereal sold in America is a box of Cheerios. General Mills’ popular franchise includes Cheerios, Honey Nut Cheerios, Frosted Cheerios, Apple Cinnamon Cheerios, MultiGrain Cheerios, Berry Burst Cheerios and Yogurt Burst Cheerios.

Cheerios also has a publishing division that includes the popular Cheerios Play Books and other activity books. For more information, go to www.cheerios.com.

ABOUT FIRST BOOK

First Book is an international nonprofit organization with a single mission: to give children from low-income families the opportunity to read and own their first new books. Through hundreds of local Advisory Boards, the First Book National Book Bank, and the First Book Marketplace, the organization provides an ongoing supply of new books to children participating in community-based mentoring, tutoring, and family literacy programs. First Book has provided brand new books to children in need in thousands of communities nationwide. For more information, visit www.FirstBook.org or call 866-393-1222.