



BERNIE'S BOOK BANK

BOOKS FOR A BETTER LIFE

BOOK DRIVE TOOLKIT



A comprehensive resource guide for a
successful children's book drive

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BOOK DRIVES MADE EASY

Our goal is to ensure hosting a book drive is a **fun, easy and impactful experience** for you and your group. In order to set you up for success, Bernie's Book Bank provides all of the essential tools you'll need to reach your goal. Materials vary based on your goal.

All book drives receive:

- A custom PDF flyer and this handy toolkit filled with tons of unique ways to promote your book drive.

Book drives with a goal of 1,500 books or more receive:

- Posters, easel signage and collection bins. Plus, we'll deliver all materials to you before the drive and pick them up after.

Want to create your own materials? Download the Bernie's Book Bank [logo](#) and [photos](#) to use on posters, flyers, social media posts, etc.

GET SOCIAL

1. Post photos and videos to social media throughout your book drive. Focus on the collection bins, book donors and progress toward your goal.
2. Tag [@berniesbookbank](#) and use [#BooksForABetterLife](#) in your posts.
3. Send photos and videos to ebasko@berniesbookbank.org to be featured on the Bernie's Book Bank social media channels.



HOW TO PROMOTE YOUR DRIVE



SPREAD THE WORD

Once the logistics of your book drive are set up and ready to go you can think about ways to promote the drive. Promoting your book drive will not only help you collect more books and reach your goal, it can also help unite your organization. When you promote your book drive you give people the chance to connect with each other, support book ownership and make an impact in the community.

Spreading the word about your book drive is easy with our customizable resources:

- [Sample letter to families](#)
- [Newsletter template](#)
- [Social media toolkit](#)
- [Press release template](#)

TIPS & TRICKS

Every book drive is unique so we've created a handy guide of tips and tricks to take your book drive to the next level. Take a look at these creative ways to engage your audience and collect more books for the at-risk Chicagoland children we serve!

SCHOOL BOOK DRIVES

- Hang up posters and pass out flyers around the school
- Post on school social media platforms
- Send out an email blast to teachers and faculty
- Advertise on the school website
- Ask for announcements to be made at the school
- Submit to the school newsletter and/or newspaper
- Set up a classroom or grade level competition
- Offer incentives for book donations, such as a pizza party
- Post on the Next-Door application

BATTLE OF THE BOOKS

Add a little friendly competition to your book drive with a "Battle of the Books." Challenge students in each grade (or classroom) to try and collect the most children's books for the book drive. You can reward the winning group with a small prize or celebration to thank them for their efforts.



WHY BERNIE'S BOOK BANK?

Throughout your book drive you might receive questions about Bernie's Book Bank from your book donors. You might also choose to craft your own materials and social media posts. If so, you can use this key information to guide your content.

THE MISSION

Bernie's Book Bank sources, processes and distributes quality new and gently used children's books to significantly increase **book ownership** among at-risk infants, toddlers and school-age children throughout Chicagoland.

THE NEED

- 61% of low-income families have no books at home for their children.
- The single most significant factor influencing a child's early educational success is an introduction to books and being read to at home prior to beginning school.
- Two-thirds of students who cannot read proficiently by the end of the 4th grade will end up in jail or on welfare.

THE CHILDREN WE SERVE

- Bernie's Book Bank currently has 900 active distribution partners and serves 360,000 children in Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will county.
- Schools that receive whole school Title 1 grant funds from the state are eligible to receive books for ALL students at the school.
- Bernie's Book Bank serves infants, toddlers and pre-school age children through programs specifically supporting children under the age of six from low-income families. These 'Under 6' programs, including Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), provide pediatric healthcare, dental care, nourishment, counseling and/or other resources to the children.

THE PROCESS

- **Source:** Bernie's Book Bank receives books from a variety of sources. Individuals donate books at our facility or one of our 150+ Book Drop Locations throughout Chicagoland. Schools, companies, and civic groups host book drives for us. Also, we source books from publishers and book distributors.
- **Process:** Volunteers sort, sticker and bag books in our processing center during 18 weekly volunteer sessions. We welcome volunteers of all ages and abilities.
- **Distribute:** Our team of drivers deliver the books directly schools and U6 programs. Children receive a bag of 6 books twice a year.

BOOK PHILOSOPHY

Bernie's Book Bank strives to distribute **age-appropriate, high-interest and culturally relevant** books to the children we serve. Each child receives 12 quality books annually. The books will be new and/or gently used (**birth-6th grade reading level**) and include a variety of **fiction and non-fiction titles**, such as picture books, chapter books, graphic novels, mysteries, biographies, science fiction, sports, science, technology and more.

BOOKS WE CAN'T USE

- Textbooks
- Dictionaries
- Activity books
- Coloring books
- Reference material
- Religious books
- Foreign language books (dual language is OK)



To make your book drive a success, please share these guidelines with your book donors.

BOOKS WE LOVE

Sometimes we're asked what books we like to have donated. While we like ALL fiction and nonfiction books for birth-6th grade reading levels, here are a few of our favorites!

PRESCHOOL/1ST GRADE

- Curious George
- Dr. Seuss
- Elephant & Piggie
- Fancy Nancy
- Frog & Toad
- Llama Llama
- Little Golden
- Madeline
- Pete the Cat
- Pinkalicious

2ND/3RD GRADE

- Amelia Bedelia
- A - Z Mysteries
- Cam Jansen
- Captain Underpants
- Horrible Harry
- Judy Moody
- Junie B. Jones
- Magic Treehouse
- Magic School Bus
- Rainbow Magic

4TH/5TH GRADE

- Animorphs
- American Girl
- Beverley Cleary
- Diary of a Wimpy Kid
- DK Series
- Goosebumps
- Hardy Boys
- Judy Blume
- Nancy Drew
- TIME for Kids

6TH GRADE

- Alex Rider
- Artemis Fowl
- Chronicles of Narnia
- Guinness Records
- Haddix
- Harry Potter
- Lemony Snicket
- National Geo Kids
- Percy Jackson
- Rick Riordan

THE GAME PLAN

By now you have everything you need to make your children's book drive a success. To best put these ideas into action we've created a sample schedule to guide you along the way to a successful book drive. You can customize this outline to make it fit your goals.

TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO BOOK DRIVE

- Hang flyers throughout school
- Add book drive information to your website
- Share book drive dates on your social media channels
- Send out letter to families
- Send out press release to local news outlets

ONE WEEK PRIOR TO BOOK DRIVE

- Include book drive information in a newsletter and/or email blast
- Share additional book drive details on your social media channels

DAY BEFORE BOOK DRIVE BEGINS

- Set up easel signage and collection bins in a visible and central location
- Share your book drive goal on your social media channels

THROUGHOUT BOOK DRIVE

- Share progress toward your goal on your social media channels
- Take photos of people donating books throughout the drive
- Keep the book drive buzz going via word of mouth and announcements
- Keep an eye on collections; if you collect a significant number of books early on in the drive and need a mid-drive pick up contact Rosie at rboeing@berniesbookbank.org

POST BOOK DRIVE

- Thank your book donors for their support (via email, newsletter, social media, etc.)
- Share this link for a tax receipt with your book donors
- Share the total number of books collected on your social media channels
- Send out a follow up press release to local news outlets sharing the success of your drive
- Prepare books for pick up. Start planning next year's drive!

