



All Navarro Discount Pharmacies to Serve as Donation Centers for Read to Learn Books for Free Program

Local pharmacy chain to collect children's books at all 32 locations beginning December 1

Miami, Florida (November XX, 2013) – Navarro Discount Pharmacies is the latest corporate partner to join the Read To Learn Books For Free Initiative – a program developed by The Miami Children's Trust at The Center for Literature and Theatre @ Miami Dade College with the goal of having all children in Miami-Dade County reading at or above grade-level by third grade. Beginning December 1, 2013, all 32 Navarro pharmacies will have the recognizable green donation bins in-store, where anyone can drop off new or gently used children's books.

The book donations will be collected from Navarro on a weekly basis and distributed across 20 strategically placed bookshelves in Miami-Dade County where children with little or no access to books can take one home.

"We are committed to helping the children of our community," said Cristina Leon Rivero, Chief Marketing Officer for Navarro Pharmacies. "Sharing The Read to Learn Books for Free campaign with our customers is a way we can join efforts to help underprivileged children receive the opportunity of learning through reading, which is such a key foundation of the education our children receive."

Nearly half of Miami-Dade County third-graders fail to read at the basic grade level. Thanks to the support of corporate participants like Navarro, this communitywide campaign aims to change that daunting reality. Children not reading on level by third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school. Read to Learn Books for Free makes books more accessible to children through strategically placed bookshelves filled with new and gently used age-appropriate books in highly visited locations – such as government agencies, low-income housing sites, and health clinics, just to name a few. Parents and children are be encouraged to take one book home from the shelves to read together.

While book drives are being held year-round to keep the shelves fully stocked, demand is already exceeding the supply of books on hand at several locations.

"This program is particularly special because it engages the whole community in recycling books that were once cherished by one generation of children so that they may now captivate a whole new generation, but with the very serious goal of helping them reach their full potential," said Charles Auslander, Interim President and CEO of The Children's Trust.

"We are extremely grateful that Navarro has stepped in to serve as a donation center for the books we so badly need to get in the hands of the underserved children in our community," said Lissette Mendez, director of programs at The Center for Literature and Theatre @ Miami Dade College.

For a list of Navarro store locations where you can donate books, please visit: <http://www.navarro.com/store-locater/>. To support *Read to Learn Books for Free*, call or e-mail us for information about how you can help: Lisette.Mendez@mdc.edu or 305.237.3298. For more information on The Children's Trust, please visit www.thechildrenstrust.org. For more information about The Center, please visit www.thecenteratmdc.org.

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ABOUT THE CHILDREN'S TRUST

The Children's Trust is a dedicated source of revenue established by voter referendum to improve the lives of children and families in Miami-Dade County by making strategic investments in their future through the planning, advocating and funding of quality services.

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR LITERATURE AND THEATRE @ MIAMI DADE COLLEGE

The Center for Literature and Theatre @ Miami Dade College promotes reading, writing and theatre throughout South Florida through activities open to all. Its Generation Genius programs for children and teens promote literacy and learning. Its creative writing program has national appeal, with courses taught by local and visiting authors. The Center is home to Prometeo Theatre, the nation's leading Spanish language, conservatory-style program offering training for actors, and featuring performances year round. In 2012, the Center celebrated its tenth year with a renewed commitment to the advancement of literary and theater arts. The Center collaborates with a number of cultural institutions and other partners in South Florida, and throughout the state, to create innovative or theme-based initiatives year-round.

ABOUT MIAMI DADE COLLEGE

Miami Dade College has a long and rich history of involvement in the cultural arts, providing South Florida with a vast array of artistic and literary offerings including the Miami Book Fair International, the Center @ MDC, the Miami International Film Festival, the MDC Live Performing Arts Series, the Cuban Cinema Series, the Miami Leadership Roundtable speakers' series, numerous renowned campus art galleries and theaters, and the nationally recognized School of Entertainment and Design Technology. With an enrollment of more than 170,000 students, MDC is the largest institution of higher education in the country and is a national model for many of its programs. The college's eight campuses and outreach centers offer more than 300 distinct degree programs including baccalaureate, associate in arts and science degrees and numerous career training certificates leading to in-demand jobs. MDC has served nearly 2,000,000 students since it opened its doors in 1960.

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