



## **Stuff the Bus Book Drive Talking Points**

### **Why it matters**

- About one in four central Iowa students are not reading proficiently by the end of third grade. (Iowa Dept. of Education)
- 23 percent of eighth-grade students are not reading proficiently. (Iowa Dept. of Education)
- Children who cannot read at grade-level by third grade are more likely to stay behind in school and are four times more likely to drop out of high school. (Annie E. Casey Foundation)
- Having access to age-appropriate books improves a child's reading scores and, ultimately, increases the likelihood that they'll graduate. Children in middle-income neighborhoods have access to approximately 13 books per child, while low-income neighborhoods have access to one book for every 300 children. (Campaign for Grade Level Reading)
- The most successful way to improve the reading achievement of low-income children is to increase their access to print. (Newman, Sanford, et al.)
- Communities ranking high in achievement tests have these factors in common: an abundance of books in public libraries, easy access to books in the community at large, and a generous number of textbooks per student. (Newman et al.)

### **What we are doing to address it**

- Books will be distributed to United Way of Central Iowa's partner programs, child-care centers, and in-home childcare providers.
- Individuals can donate new or gently used books from a recommended list at [www.stuffthebusdsm.org](http://www.stuffthebusdsm.org) for children ages birth to young adult. Donations can be dropped off at Athene on May 25 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

- This book drive is one way we can give children access to new and gently used books. Getting a variety of books promotes understanding and respect for all – especially when the books feature characters who represent different ethnicities, races, and disabilities.
- All books will be collected at Athene USA, 7700 Mills Civic Parkway, West Des Moines, on May 25 from 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- United Way of Central Iowa organizes Stuff the Bus with sponsorship from Athene USA and SHAZAM.

Learn more at [www.stuffthebusdsm.org](http://www.stuffthebusdsm.org) or contact Vanessa Sedrel at [Vanessa.Sedrel@unitedwaydm.org](mailto:Vanessa.Sedrel@unitedwaydm.org).