



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Monday, December 1, 2025 (Toronto, Ontario)**

## **Spreading Joy and Connection This Holiday Season: The Children of Inmates Reading Program (ChIRP) Partners with the Indigo Love of Reading Foundation**

In partnership with **The Indigo Love of Reading Foundation**, we've selected the special books for this year's **2025 Children of Inmates Reading Program (ChIRP) Holiday initiative**.

The chosen titles are:

- **English:** *The Gift of Words* by Peter Reynolds (Scholastic Canada)
- **French:** *Tout un cadeau (Finding Christmas)* by Robert Munsch (Scholastic Canada)

Thanks to the Foundation's generosity, these remarkable holiday books were shipped directly to parents and their children across Canada, in late October.

In November, our dedicated volunteers sat down with incarcerated parents to help them record themselves reading these books aloud. Each child will then receive both the book and a recording of their parent reading it — a deeply personal gift that bridges distance with love and connection. All just in time for the holidays.

"As a fellow Canadian, I'm deeply moved and honoured that *The Gift of Words* has been chosen for the ChIRP program." **author and illustrator Peter Reynolds** said today. "Stories have the power to connect hearts, even across the toughest divides — and to know that parents and their children will be sharing *The Gift of Words* together, despite distance, is profoundly meaningful. Programs like ChIRP remind us that compassion and creative uses of technology can support literacy and family connection no matter the obstacles."

"The Indigo Love of Reading Foundation is working across Canada to ensure children in need have access to books this holiday season. This initiative will not only put books into children's hands, it will also keep families connected through the power of reading, and we are proud to support that effort." - Rose Lipton, ILOR Executive Director

Now in its **17th year**, the ChIRP program has grown from just 4 sites to **26 active programs nationwide**, with more joining every month. This marks our **second year partnering with the Indigo Love of Reading Foundation's team**, whose continued support helps bring comfort, literacy, and joy to children and families separated by incarceration.

**Carla Veitch, the founder of the program and the Volunteer Lead at Beaver Creek Institution** said today "As the world around us changes and we from the outside have access to books in many formats it's still one of the greatest gifts a child can receive. To have a book in their hands and then to hear the voice of their absent parent reading the precious words to them is magical. These gifts will have a lasting effect on a broken relationship"

We're so grateful for this partnership and hopeful this becomes an **annual holiday tradition** — one that celebrates reading, family, and the enduring power of love through stories.

**The Indigo Love of Reading Foundation** is committed to addressing educational inequality, and more specifically the literacy crisis in Canada. Since 2004, the Foundation has been dedicated to putting books in the hands of children in high-needs communities across Canada. With the support of Indigo and its customers, they have committed over \$36 million to over 3,600 schools, impacting more than 1 million children. The Foundation is dedicated to raising awareness about the critical importance of children's literacy while providing essential literary support to high-needs children across Canada.

**Book Club for Inmates** commitment to the successful reintegration of inmates and to stronger, healthier communities includes the development of **Children of Inmates Reading Program (ChIRP)**. The mandate of ChIRP is to build and enhance a healthier parent/child relationship, develop literacy and listening skills, increase vocabulary and attention spans for children and promote a love of learning in children through the consistent presence of a parent and books.

Learn more at [www.bookclubsforinmates.com/chirp](http://www.bookclubsforinmates.com/chirp).

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