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Whole Kids Foundation Celebrates June's National Pollinator Month by Taking Kids Inside the Hive with Free Online Educational Activities

Annual Give Bees a Chance Campaign Raises Awareness to Fund Pollinator Education and Beehives for Schools

AUSTIN, Texas (June 17, 2020) — With June as National Pollinator Month, Whole Kids Foundation announced today the launch of the Give Bees a Chance campaign showcasing the vital role that bees play in our food system. This year's campaign features free comprehensive online educational activities readymade for parents, teachers and curious kids.

Just in time for National Pollinator Week, June 22 -28, the annual Give Bees a Chance campaign raises awareness and funds to support <u>educational beehive grants</u> and pollinator learning initiatives for schools. This year, Whole Kids Foundation intends to invest its one-millionth dollar in pollinator education and has awarded more than 500 bee grants to support educational beehives at schools since 2014.

Students are invited to go inside the hive and enter the world of honeybees with loads of activities, crafts, trivia, videos, audio stories, and a 20-page downloadable guide available at no cost on the nonprofit's website. In addition, families can purchase a Give Bees a Chance activity box online for \$50. The curated activity box is filled with hands-on learning and fun for an extended educational experience. Proceeds from the activity box benefit the Bee Grant program and includes shipping costs.

Honeybees pollinate more than 100 types of crops in the U.S., however, recent studies by the <u>United States Department of Agriculture</u> show large-scale losses in bee colonies. Threats to their colonies include pesticides, mites and beetles, diseases, starvation, extreme weather conditions and insufficient foliage.

With one in three bites of food made possible by pollinators, honeybees are crucial to the future of our food. Dedicated to helping kids and families eat a rainbow of fresh veggies and fruits, Whole Kids Foundation gives kids access to educational beehives where they can observe bees up close and learn about the vital role these pollinators play in growing our food.

"Through the Give Bees a Chance campaign, we're inviting parents and kids to explore and observe the world of honeybees with our engaging online learning resources," said Nona Evans, president and executive director of Whole Kids Foundation. "Both through online access and

with the educational beehives we provide through our grant program, our goal is to help families understand how important pollinators are to our food ecosystem. These opportunities help empower kids to become stewards for pollinators and the rest of the natural environment."

The Give Bees a Chance campaign goal is to raise \$95,000 to fund educational beehives for schools across the nation and provide additional honeybee education resources for classrooms. Pollinator education enhances other crucial subjects such as biology, agriculture, ecology, nutrition and business.

As an integral part of this year's campaign, organic producers <u>Cascadian Farm</u> and <u>Horizon</u> <u>Organic</u> are lead sponsors, alongside additional partners <u>Honest</u>, <u>Kashi</u> and <u>MALK</u>. Together, they are pledging a combined total of \$87,500, equating to about 35 educational beehive grants. All of these generous suppliers are passionate about protecting pollinators and preserving sustainable food systems, as shown in this <u>video supporting the campaign</u>.

Additionally, the Gives Bees a Chance activity box was made possible by generous partners Readers to Eaters Publishing, Savannah Bee Company and Seeds of Change.

Whole Kids Foundation invites anyone interested to support the campaign by donating online or purchasing a bee activity box at wholekidsfoundation.org/givebeesachance. Free educational activities are available at the Whole Kids Foundation website.

Since 2014, Whole Kids Foundation has granted 501 educational beehives with support from The Bee Cause Project, which provides resources to schools, including free curriculum on beehives. Visit the Whole Kids Foundations website here for more information on the Bee Grant Program.

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About Whole Kids Foundation

Whole Kids Foundation supports schools and inspires families to improve children's nutrition and wellness. Founded by Whole Foods Market in 2011, the independent, nonprofit organization is based in Austin, Texas, and serves schools and organizations in the U.S., Canada and the U.K. For more information on the Foundation's school programs including school gardens, salad bars, beehives and nutrition education for teachers, visit wholekidsfoundation.org. For ongoing news and updates, follow Whole Kids Foundation on Facebook or Twitter at @WholeKidsFnd.