



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA AND THE WALMART FOUNDATION RECOGNIZE NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK WITH THE LAUNCH OF 100 READING ROOMS**

*\$10,000 Grant from the Walmart Foundation Gives Boys & Girls Club of Newtown a "Bright Spot" Reading Room*

**Sarasota, FL (April 20, 2011)** – In recognition of National Library Week (April 10-16) and Support Teen Literature Day (April 14), Boys & Girls Clubs of America announces the expansion of its reading initiative that promotes both educational and leisure reading for tweens and teens through a \$1.15 million grant from the Walmart Foundation. The Bright Spot for Reading initiative will be added to 100 Boys & Girls Clubs across the U.S. to create a dedicated reading center for members. In Sarasota County, the Roy McBean Club in Newtown received a \$10K grant to create a "Bright Spot" Reading Room at their club.

According to the 2009 Reading Report Card, only 33 percent of fourth graders are reading proficiently and 17 percent of low-income fourth-grade students are reading well. By the eighth grade, the reading proficiency rate drops to 32 percent for all students and 16 percent for low-income eighth-grade students.

"The Walmart Foundation's Bright Spot for Reading initiative is essential in motivating our youth to read and preparing them for academic success," says Mack Reid, President and CEO, Boys & Girls Clubs of Sarasota County, "We are grateful to the Walmart Foundation for the opportunity to create an environment that will encourage and allow our youth to enjoy and develop a lifelong love of reading."

The Bright Spot Reading Centers will feature books targeting young people ages 11 to 15; including programs to encourage Boys & Girls Club of Newtown members to read more and develop a positive attitude toward reading. The centers will offer activities in drama, art and technology; field trips and service learning projects to integrate reading opportunities into every area of the Club. Participants of the reading program at the BGC Club in Newtown are planning to host a Tea Party for non-participating members to encourage involvement and promote reading throughout the Club.

#### **About the Boys & Girls Clubs of Sarasota County**

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Sarasota County have played an integral role in the Sarasota County community for more than 40 years, providing daily programs and services to thousands of young people. The Mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Sarasota County is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.

#### **About Philanthropy at Walmart**

Walmart and the Walmart Foundation are proud to support the charitable causes that are important to customers and associates in their own neighborhoods. The Walmart Foundation funds initiatives focused on education, workforce development, economic opportunity, environmental sustainability, and health and wellness. From Feb. 1, 2009 through Jan. 31, 2010, Walmart and the Walmart Foundation gave more

than \$512 million in cash and in-kind gifts globally, \$467 million of which was donated in the U.S. To learn more, visit [www.walmartfoundation.org](http://www.walmartfoundation.org).

**About National Library Week**

First sponsored in 1958, National Library Week is a national observance sponsored by the American Library Association (ALA) and libraries across the country each April. It is a time to celebrate the contributions of our nation's libraries and librarians and to promote library use and support. All types of libraries - school, public, academic and special - participate.

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