



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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WITH PHOTO  
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**Catie's Closet Launches  
Fifth Annual Fill the Bus Event**

DRACUT, MA – Catie's Closet recently kicked off its Fifth Annual Fill The Bus Event, the organization's largest clothing and toiletry drive to provide back-to-school essentials to students living in poverty.

The Fill The Bus initiative spans across the Merrimack Valley, Springfield, Boston and Southern New Hampshire and will run through September 30<sup>th</sup>.

This year, the organization established virtual opportunities for individuals, families, communities and companies to get involved, including:

- Participation in the first-ever Catie's Closet virtual 5k
- Hosting virtual drives and donating clothes
- Purchasing and/or filling Catie's Closet "Confidence Packs"
- Sponsorship packages for businesses

"Back-to-school season is the most important time of year for us," said Mickey Cockrell, Co-Founder and CEO of Catie's Closet. "We are focused on stocking all 85 of our closets and two distribution centers to ensure we can meet the needs of our students throughout the upcoming school year."

To recognize five years of Fill The Bus, Catie's Closet set the goal of collecting 50,000 pieces of clothing and \$50,000 total. With the average donated bag containing 25 pieces, the organization needs 2,000 bags total.

"This year's Fill The Bus is particularly critical, said Cockrell. "Not only has COVID-19 increased poverty, unemployment rates and mental health issues in children, but it has completely changed the way students will attend school this fall and receive the support they so desperately need. No matter how schools open this year, we are promising to be there for our students."

To learn more about participating in Fill The Bus, visit [catiescloset.org](https://catiescloset.org).



Photo Outline: Catie's Closet will run its 5<sup>th</sup> annual Fill The Bus event now through September 30<sup>th</sup> to collect critical back-to-school essentials for students living in poverty. This event is open to individuals, families, companies and communities with virtual opportunities to get involved.

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Established in 2010, Catie's Closet is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that improves school attendance and the self-esteem of students living in poverty by offering in-school closets filled with free clothing, toiletries and other necessities. Serving 50,000 students, Catie's Closet is offered in 85 schools across nine school districts in Massachusetts and New Hampshire with distribution centers in Dracut and Boston, Massachusetts. More information is available at [catiescloset.org](http://catiescloset.org).