

PRESS RELEASE

‘Butze’ Opens: Bertelsmann Combines Forces to Support Berlin Center for Homeless Youth

- **Straßenkinder e. V. officially opens its “Butze” center for homeless youth in Berlin today**
- **Several Bertelsmann companies, foundations, and divisions support the “Butze”**
- **Support ranges from donations and fundraising to campaign development, media coverage, and the opening ceremony**
- **Birgit and Thomas Rabe and their foundation are among the project's principal supporters**

Gütersloh/Berlin, October 2, 2026 – The “Butze” center for homeless youth officially opens today in Berlin-Lichtenberg. The project, the first of its kind in Germany, is run by the nonprofit organization Straßenkinder e. V. and offers homeless children and young people a safe haven, personal support, and new prospects for an independent, self-determined life. Among the project's principal supporters are Birgit and Thomas Rabe, who have spent many years working to make the “Butze” a reality, both privately and through their foundation, the Birgit und Thomas Rabe Stiftung.

Bertelsmann and various companies, foundations, and divisions of the Group have also been involved in the project for many years. Bertelsmann has helped Straßenkinder e. V. coordinate activities surrounding the project and organized its own fundraising initiatives, including a fitness challenge during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Group's involvement ranges from donations and fundraising to campaign development, media coverage, and support for today's opening ceremony.

The Stiftung RTL – Wir helfen Kindern e. V. foundation has supported the “Butze” and raised funds for the project. The Stern Stiftung foundation has also supported the project. Through its coverage of the “Butze,” particularly on its local radio stations in Berlin, RTL Radio is helping to raise awareness of the project and the situation of homeless children and young people.

Bertelsmann Marketing Services contributed its communications and marketing expertise: Territory developed the campaign concept for the “Butze,” while Bertelsmann Campaign helped implement a fundraising initiative.

Thomas Rabe also helped secure contributions to the “Butze” from several renowned artists. Berlin-based painter Christopher Lehmpfuhl, photographer Jim Rakete, and sculptor Aron Demetz have provided paintings, photographs, and sculptures for the new center, ensuring that art has a visible presence in the building.

The Bertelsmann Group is also supporting today's official opening, with the Viveno Group providing catering for guests.

Thomas Rabe, Chairman & CEO of Bertelsmann, said: “The ‘Butze’ is an extraordinary project that offers young people shelter and, above all, new prospects for the future. My wife and I have been involved with Straßenkinder e. V. and the development of this center for

many years. I'm especially pleased that Bertelsmann and so many companies, foundations, and divisions of the Group have also contributed so much to the project."

Eckhard Baumann, Chairman of Straßenkinder e. V., said: "The opening of the 'Butze' is a dream come true for us. We're creating a place where young people can find shelter, rebuild trust, and develop new prospects for their future. A project of this scale would never have been possible without our supporters. Birgit and Thomas Rabe have made a tremendous difference through their extraordinary personal commitment. Bertelsmann and various companies, foundations, and divisions of the Group have also supported us over the years, drawing on their different areas of expertise. We're incredibly grateful for all their support."

The "Butze" is located near the Lichtenberg S-Bahn and U-Bahn station and brings together a range of services for homeless children and young people across seven floors in a single building. These include approximately 40 residential and overnight accommodation spaces, ranging from emergency beds to micro-apartments. Other facilities include a heated drop-in center, social and legal counseling services, educational spaces, and a large clothing bank. Straßenkinder e. V. aims to help young people regain some stability in their lives, provide them with individualized support, and guide them step by step from life on the streets toward an independent, self-determined future.

About Straßenkinder e. V.

Straßenkinder e. V. supports children and young people who are affected by or at risk of homelessness and social exclusion. The nonprofit organization provides street outreach services, educational programs, and practical assistance with everyday life. It also operates the "Butze," the first center of its kind in Germany to offer homeless youth shelter, counseling, education, and various housing options under one roof.

About Bertelsmann

Bertelsmann is a media, services, and education company with more than 75,000 employees that operates in more than 50 countries around the world. It includes the entertainment group RTL Group, the trade book publishing group Penguin Random House, the music company BMG, the service provider Arvato Group, Bertelsmann Marketing Services, the Bertelsmann Education Group, and Bertelsmann Investments. The company generated revenues of €19 billion in the 2025 financial year. Bertelsmann stands for creativity and entrepreneurship. This combination promotes first-class media content and innovative service solutions that inspire customers around the world.

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