



“PBS KIDS ISLAND” SELECTED AS EDITOR’S CHOICE BY CHILDREN’S TECHNOLOGY REVIEW

Leading authority on children’s technology products honors www.readytolearnreading.org for free literacy games and resources

ARLINGTON, VA, December 1, 2008 – PBS and The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) have announced that PBS KIDS Island, a new literacy Web site for preschoolers, has been awarded the “Editor’s Choice Award” by *Children’s Technology Review*, one of the industry’s leading authorities on technology products for children from birth to age 15. Each month *Children’s Technology Review*’s editors assess a wide variety of new interactive technology products designed for children. Reviews are based on five criteria: ease of use, education, entertainment, design features and value. The Editor’s Choice Awards are given to an exclusive group of “no fail” products, worthy of their cost, and able to keep children engaged for days at a time.

According to the notification letter, “The *Children’s Technology Review* Editor’s Choice Awards are awarded to only the highest quality children’s products in the interactive media category.” In the November 2008 review, CTR Editor Warren Buckleitner, Ph.D. writes: “PBS KIDS Island packs a lot of educational value into an easy-to-use, fun and (gasp) advertising free service. If you teach early readers, or live with one, this site is certainly worth your bookmark.”

PBS KIDS Island, the centerpiece of the new PBS KIDS Raising Readers Web site (www.readytolearnreading.org), provides free reading games and activities for children, parents, caregivers and teachers to use at home or in the classroom. The program was developed through a cooperative agreement of the U.S. Department of Education, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, The Ready To Learn Partnership, and funded by a Ready To Learn grant.

“Through this grant, PBS KIDS Island gives us the opportunity to reach as many children as possible, to help them develop critical reading skills,” said Dr. Jayne James, executive director of the Ready To Learn grant for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

“As a new resource for parents, caregivers and teachers, we are excited PBS KIDS Island has been recognized by a leading authority on healthy and educational media for children,” said Lesli Rotenberg, senior vice president, Children’s Media, PBS. “There are millions of children across the United States who don’t have basic literacy skills, so we are proud to offer online learning tools that help all children as they discover the world of letters and words.”

PBS KIDS Island takes children on an adventure, as they build their own online island by playing reading games with PBS KIDS® characters from *SUPER WHY!*, *WordWorld*, *Between The Lions* and *Sesame Street*. Providing a safe environment for emerging readers to explore, the research-based program guides children through seven different literacy-building levels, including rhyming, letter identification, alliteration, phonics, letter sequencing, phonemic awareness and reading/vocabulary.

“PBS KIDS Island is built on a literacy framework, scaffolded to preschool reading curriculum,” said Rob Lippincott, senior vice president of Education at PBS. “The site tracks a child’s progress and helps parents, caregivers and teachers identify areas where the child may need additional support.”

PBS KIDS Island is currently serving the needs of children ages 2-to-5, with plans to offer content for children ages 6-to-8 in 2009.

About PBS KIDS Raising Readers and the Ready To Learn Grant

PBS KIDS Raising Readers utilizes reading-focused PBS KIDS multi-media content, including television programming, Web content and games for parents and teachers, professional development for caregivers and teachers, and curriculum for preschool and Kindergarten settings. This national initiative incorporates research-based methodologies focused on how children learn from media and employs a 360-degree approach, surrounding children and families with learning opportunities where they live and are most likely to interact.

PBS KIDS Raising Readers is funded by the US Department of Education’s Ready To Learn grant and is a cooperative agreement of the U. S. Department of Education, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), PBS and The Ready To Learn Partnership to help children ages 2-8 build reading skills. The program serves a broad spectrum of children, but is most focused on low-income families.

About CPB

CPB, a private, nonprofit corporation created by Congress in 1967, is the steward of the federal government's investment in public broadcasting. It helps support the operations of more than 1100 locally owned and operated public television and radio stations nationwide, and is the largest single source of funding for research, technology, and program development for public radio, television, and related on-line services.



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