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Kudos continue as Club Penguin marks one-year anniversary

Kelowna, British Columbia –Just one year after it launched, Club Penguin (www.clubpenguin.com) continues to reach new milestones of success and garner kudos for the quality of its product and its work improving Internet safety for kids.

The popular website that allows children to play games and chat in one of the safest online environments to date was recently chosen by Children's Technology Review (CTR) to receive its coveted Editor's Choice Award.

CTR is an independent monthly survey that reviews children's technology products from professional educators' perspectives.

In a recent review of Club Penguin, CTR awarded the site 4.5 stars out of 5, saying, "The experience is social and easy to play, and it offers a variety of informal learning opportunities. As a language experience, the program gets children busily typing with others, and there are a variety of games that require logical thinking and strategy. All in all, this is a noteworthy service."

"It's gratifying to receive such a high rating from a publication that is a trusted source for unbiased and credible reviews of technology products aimed specifically at children," says Lane Merrifield of Club Penguin. "Our sole focus at Club Penguin is the safety and enjoyment of our young users and we really value the support of other organizations that display a similarly strong commitment to children and families."

Since Club Penguin launched its virtual world populated by colorful, animated penguins in October 2005, it's experienced a rapid growth in popularity and reputation.

In March 2006, Club Penguin made its debut on Miniclip.com, the world's largest website dedicated to playing online games. A month later, Club Penguin was the number one game on the site, a position it has consistently maintained ever since.

Club Penguin...

With concerns about online safety for children at an all time high, Club Penguin has also garnered favourable reviews for its commitment to protecting its young users.

Thanks to a sophisticated filtering system and the presence of live moderators who monitor what's going on in the world and deal with any reports of misconduct, Club Penguin offers unprecedented peace of mind for parents. It also adheres to a strict privacy policy and includes no advertising.

"Although advertising certainly has its place in the world of adults, I don't think it belongs on a site dedicated to children," says Merrifield, a father of two. "I wouldn't let my child watch an hour of advertising on TV. So why would I on the web?"

Club Penguin recently partnered with NetSmartz Workshop, a leading educational safety resource that teaches children and teens how to stay safer on the Internet.

The site was also selected by the Better Business Bureau's BBB *OnLine* program to receive its Kid's Privacy Seal of Approval, a respected designation currently held by less than a dozen other companies in the world.

Club Penguin is designed for 8-14-year-olds but is open to children of all ages. Although the site is funded by subscriptions, you don't have to be a paying member to visit or play games.

For more information see Q&A sheet or contact:

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What is Club Penguin?

Club Penguin is a virtual world where children can play games, have fun and interact with each other.

How does it work?

Each player chooses a penguin, gives it an identity, and explores Club Penguin, interacting with other penguins by chatting, playing games, sending greeting cards, or using emotes (emotion icons) and actions (i.e. wave, dance, sit, walk or throw a snowball).

By helping other participants and playing games, players earn virtual coins that allow them to buy clothing and accessories for their penguin or furniture for their igloo.

Who is Club Penguin for?

Club Penguin is designed for 8-14 year olds, but is open to children of all ages.

Why did you create Club Penguin?

Chatting and gaming are the two most popular online activities for children, yet most products are geared to older teens and adults. As parents of young children, we wanted to create a fun, online world we'd be comfortable letting our own kids visit.

Is it safe?

In order to ensure the safest possible environment we created two chat options:

Ultimate Safe Chat is the perfect solution for parents seeking the ultimate in online safety. This option limits what users can say to a predefined menu of greetings, questions, and statements, as well as emotes, actions and greeting cards. When it comes to chatting, these users can only see other Ultimate Safe Chat messages.

Standard Safe Chat allows players to type their own messages to other users. Every message that is typed first goes through a sophisticated filter which blocks inappropriate words and phrases. Club Penguin's filter also breaks up words and phrases phonetically in order to decipher and catch codes or other methods players might use in an attempt to get past the system. This added component allows the filter to block attempts to communicate a phone number or other personal information.

Although the filter is continuously updated, comments that could be offensive to some players may occasionally get through. In order to limit that and further protect the security of Standard Safe Chat participants, moderators monitor what's going on and receive player reports of misconduct. An "M" icon on the upper, right-hand portion of the screen reminds participants a moderator is available to help. Players who engage in inappropriate behavior can be silenced or banned.

I've heard a lot about MySpace. How does Club Penguin compare?

While both sites offer forms of so-called "social networking", MySpace provides a forum for its users to post photos and other identifying personal information. Club Penguin strongly discourages the posting of any personal information and has a range of technological and human safeguards in place to ensure those details cannot get through. (**See "Is it safe?"**)

Are my child's personal details safe with Club Penguin?

Yes. Club Penguin has a strict Privacy Policy. We voluntarily conform to the U.S. Department of Commerce's Safe Harbor Principles and the Canadian Code of Practice.

Does it cost anything to join Club Penguin?

Although anyone can enjoy Club Penguin free of charge, they won't have the same privileges as paying members, such as buying clothing or decorating their own igloo.

Memberships cost \$5.95 per month, however, reduced rates are available with six-month or one year memberships. These can be purchased online with Visa, MasterCard, PayPal, check, money order, or through numerous pay by cash options.

Why charge anything at all?

Instead of financing our operations through advertising as most websites do, Club Penguin relies solely on paid memberships. By remaining ad-free, we can provide our users a safe haven from the incessant marketing that characterizes so much of life today.

How is Club Penguin making a difference?

Approximately 10% of proceeds from each Club Penguin membership support organizations that work on behalf of the world's youngest and most vulnerable citizens. Our Kids Helping Kids program allows Club Penguin members to play a role in securing a happier and healthier future for other children around the globe.