

**Subcommittee Testimony, Cyber Safety Congressional Hearing  
-on Healthy Families and Communities  
Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc.,testifying on June 24, 2010**

Dave Finnegan, Chief Technology Bear

**Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc.** is the only global company that offers an interactive make-your-own stuffed animal retail-entertainment experience. The company was founded in 1997 and currently operates more than 400 Build-A-Bear Workshop stores worldwide, including company-owned stores in the U.S., Puerto Rico, Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland and France, and franchise stores in Europe, Asia, Australia, Africa, the Middle East, and Mexico.

**Goal –**

**Internet Safety and cyberbullying are important issues to Build-A-Bear Workshop and are especially relevant to protecting kids in this generation. We are committed to working together with other stakeholders to make the Internet a safer place for kids through education and awareness.**

Build-A-Bear Workshop partners with others to achieve the goal of providing safer internet spaces for kids. In October of 2009, Build-A-Bear Workshop launched the “Stop Cyberbullying Month” campaign to reach kids and their parents with a cyber safety message in order to educate them on the importance of playing safely online. Our objective has been to be a part of the solution to stop cyberbullying. The company is committed to children and families and protecting kids is paramount to us. We believe that to accomplish our goal we need the partnership of parents, kids, industry, policymakers, law enforcement and educators.

**Reaching kids:** Build-A-Bear Workshop is an organization that addresses and stops cyberbullying by diligently educating, equipping and monitoring our virtual space. The Build-A-Bear Workshop company-wide Stop Cyberbullying program is comprised of several online, in store and media elements. The reason we employ a variety of tools is to ensure that we are able to reach as many kids as possible. We are educating kids by creating awareness of what they can do to protect themselves online. With our campaign, we generated **2,600,000 impressions** with our “Stop, Block and Tell” event. In addition, over **165,000 Guests** have taken the Stop Cyberbullying pledge online and there have been over **200,000 Guests** online who have taken our Cyber Safe Quiz to help them understand the best ways to remain cybersafe. We continue to add games and online tools to educate and integrate with their play.

**Reaching parents and others:** Because Build-A-Bear Workshop believes that internet safety takes a commitment from the parent, we incorporated a number of communications channels to reach out to parents and others in the community with the Cyber Safety Message. Since October 2009, **350,000 In-store** Calendars have been distributed to Guests in stores throughout the country. In addition, media outreach has extended to print, online, broadcast and bloggers to achieve over **70,000,000 media impressions**.

In addition to its outreach to kids and parents, Build-A-Bear Workshop has partnered with other key groups to communicate the message of cyber safety. In October 2009, the company sponsored the Stop CyberBullying Event, meeting with other corporate leaders and child advocacy groups in a first ever Coalition event in Washington D.C. on Capitol Hill. Experts representing many different areas of the cyber safety attended for the discussion along with Build-A-Bear Workshop and other companies to share cyber safety policies and practices. We continue to partner with parents, policymakers and industry leaders to generate awareness and encourage internet safety.

**In order to reach the goal of providing safer internet spaces we propose that the industry, policy/law enforcement, teachers and educators, parents and children and internet safety organizations work together to strategize around this topic to implement the agreed upon outcomes.**

For additional information please visit:

<http://www.pwrnewmedia.com/2009/babw90930/index.html>