



Children's Hospital Boston
300 Longwood Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02115
phone 617-355-2000 | fax 617-730-0004 | www.cmch.tv



Children's Hospital Boston



HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL



HARVARD SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC HEALTH

January 30, 2009

Marsali Hancock
President
Internet Keep Safe Coalition
5220 36th Street N
Arlington, VA 22207

Dear Marsali:

The Center on Media and Child Health (CMCH) an affiliation of the Harvard Medical School, Harvard School of Public Health and Children's Hospital Boston, fully supports the development of Woogi World. This program is timely and provides effective, engaging tools for preparing children to live in the information age.

For young children, the Internet provides endless opportunities for learning, playing, and socializing; it is, quite literally, a virtual playground. Like any playground there are opportunities for growth and development as well as potential threats. Currently, most children enter this playground unprepared to deal with troubling situations and unmotivated to seek the most educational experiences. The majority of parents did not grow up in a world where such rich virtual experiences were possible, and, therefore, do not have the skills necessary to monitor and guide their children's online exploration. Woogi World can meet the needs of both children and parents. It has the potential to provide children with an entertaining and secure environment that also educates players about safe online behaviors and strategies for balancing family, computer use, and school. By involving parents in an in-depth manner beyond simply providing consent, they too will be given a novel experience that will help them develop online parenting strategies. CMCH is excited to play a role in the development of Woogi World and we are encouraged by the producers' inclusion of evaluation research in the design process.

CMCH was established in 2001 and holds as its central mission to conduct, coordinate and compile scientific research to improve the understanding of how media affect children's health in positive and negative ways and provide evidence-based expertise to initiatives and programs that address children's involvement with media. The Center's director, Dr. Michael Rich, and staff regularly have their work published in highly regarded academic journals and speak to national and international audiences of researchers, policy makers, clinicians and parents. Outreach efforts spearheaded by the Center are designed to translate the scientific knowledge in the area of media and child health into helpful and actionable information for our audiences. CMCH's Web site, multiple newsletters, and blog reach 1000s of people a month.

The Internet, like all forms of media, has the potential to influence the lives of young people in both healthy and unhealthy ways. We at CMCH believe that through engagement with Woogi World's games, children will learn active and critical media use, thus, enhancing the opportunity for media to have a positive outcome. Again, CMCH is delighted to support the development of Woogi World.

Sincerely,

David Bickham, PhD
Research Scientist

Karen Fisher
Director of Marketing