

MONIQUE BURR FOUNDATION FOR CHILDREN PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MONIQUE BURR FOUNDATION FOR CHILDREN ANNOUNCES STATEWIDE FLORIDA SAFETY AND CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION EDUCATION PROGRAM

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (April 1, 2011) – During the April 1 Prevent Child Abuse Florida/Ounce of Prevention press conference to recognize Child Abuse Prevention Month, the [Monique Burr Foundation for Children, Inc.](http://www.moniqueburrfoundation.org), announced the Speak Up Be Safe™ safety and child abuse prevention education program now being piloted in select counties during the 2010-2011 school year to first, third and fifth grade students. The rollout of the final statewide program will take place during the 2011-2012 school year and will target students in first through fifth grades.

Speak Up Be Safe™ was developed by the Monique Burr Foundation and Childhelp® in conjunction with the Office of the Governor of the State of Florida, the State Department of Education, the State Department of Health, the Florida Department of Children and Families, the Department of Juvenile Justice, Ounce of Prevention and Prevent Child Abuse Florida. Under the review of the Office of the Governor and the Education Cooperative Planning Team, the program was created in response to a five-year plan to develop a progressive prevention program. The curriculum addresses all forms of child abuse, neglect, bullying and

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internet safety and satisfies the educational requirements outlined in Florida Statute 39, which are proceedings relating to child abuse prevention education for children, their parents/caregivers and school personnel, and set forth by the Department of Education for health education included in the Sunshine State Standards.

“I fully understand the critical need for the coordination of services to educate our children regarding child safety and abuse prevention,” said Barbara Foster, Ph.D., Florida Deputy Chief Child Advocate and convener of the Education Cooperative Planning Team. “Our team members have committed time and resources in the development of this new curriculum for Florida in partnership with the Monique Burr Foundation for Children. We understand what the impacts of this education program will be for our students. This program will make a tremendous difference in the lives of Florida’s children. We thank the Monique Burr Foundation for Children for making this possible.”

The Education Cooperative Planning Team was created to lead the development of this five-year plan, including the development of a safety and child abuse prevention curriculum. Speak Up Be Safe™ takes a comprehensive approach through the incorporation of more than 90 Sunshine State Standards, mobilizing efforts from each county in Florida to address child abuse, neglect and bullying and internet safety education. The program focuses on enhancing a child’s overall sense of confidence with regard to safety, creating a responsive safety network with

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peers, teachers, parent/caregivers and other adults a child identifies as safe and promotes respect for self and peers. The curriculum is based on the following five safety rules:

1. It's MY body!
2. Ask an adult if I am safe.
3. I have choices.
4. Tell someone.
5. It's NEVER my fault.

The counties selected for the safety and child abuse prevention education pilot program are a representation of the diversity of Florida based on demographics and geographic areas and include Duval, Clay, Hillsborough and Pasco counties.

The curriculum for the program was developed through a partnership with Arizona State University, which has a strong reputation as a leader in research programs through its School of Education.

“The Monique Burr Foundation for Children has provided safety and child abuse education to thousands of children during the past 13 years and we are honored to be a part of this statewide program that will ultimately educate every child and parent at our state’s elementary schools,” said Ed Burr, who founded the Monique Burr Foundation for Children in 1997 with a mission of giving hope in the lives of children by providing training and education to prevent and reduce

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abuse. “In developing the curriculum for the safety and child abuse prevention education pilot program, we have engaged multiple agencies, organizations and families to deliver the message of child abuse education to students and elementary schools across the state. Support for the program has been raised through the fundraising efforts of the Monique Burr Foundation for Children, Inc. and individual charitable donations.”

In the United States, 3.2 million children per year have reported being abused or neglected. In 2008, Florida ranked 15th in the nation in incidents of child victimization. Internet abuse has also become more widespread, as almost 93 percent of children ages 12 to 17 have often unmonitored online access. More information about child abuse statistics and prevention education can be found at www.moniqueburrfoundation.org.

About the Monique Burr Foundation for Children

The [Monique Burr Foundation for Children, Inc.](http://www.moniqueburrfoundation.org) is a nonprofit organization created in 1997 with a mission to give hope in the lives of children by providing child abuse prevention education throughout the state of Florida.

In 2009, the foundation reached more than 25,000 children in Northeast Florida and the Tampa Bay area with its advocacy programs and since its inception has contributed and donated more than \$2 million to child-serving agencies in the region.

The foundation is currently pilot testing a child abuse prevention education program that will address safety from all forms of child abuse, bullying and

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neglect as well as including tools for parents and school personnel. This program is a collaborative effort with the Office of the Governor of the State of Florida, the State Department of Education, the State Department of Health, the Florida Department of Children and Families and Prevent Child Abuse Florida. A state-wide program is on track to be offered to schools for the 2011-2012 school year.

For more information about the Monique Burr Foundation for Children, call (904) 642-0210 or visit www.moniqueburrfoundation.org.

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