

## **MONIQUE BURR FOUNDATION FOR CHILDREN PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **MONIQUE BURR FOUNDATION FOR CHILDREN PROVIDES SAFETY AND CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION EDUCATION STATEWIDE**

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (Nov. 10, 2011) – Recent events have once again brought to the forefront the importance of child abuse safety and prevention programs for all school-aged children. The [Monique Burr Foundation for Children, Inc.](http://www.moniqueburrfoundation.org), a nonprofit organization created in 1997, provides child abuse prevention education throughout the state of Florida with [Speak Up Be Safe™](http://www.speakupbesafe.com), an education program that addresses safety from all forms of child abuse, bullying, cyberbullying and internet dangers, and provides resources for parents and school personnel. Additionally, the foundation provides community resources regarding safety and abuse prevention including an informative website, speaking engagements and a safety blog, [Speak Up Be Safe Florida](http://www.speakupbesafe.com), with up-to-date prevention information for professionals, parents and anyone interested in protecting children.

“In the United States, 3.2 million children are reported each year as being abused or neglected, yet as we are seeing in current media reports, much abuse goes unreported and allows the abuse to continue,” said Executive Director Lynn Layton.

“Reporting in itself is a form of prevention and in the state of Florida the law reads ANYONE with reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect SHALL report to their local

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Department of Children & Families office. The Speak Up Be Safe curriculum is another form of prevention, educating children.”

Speak Up Be Safe focuses on enhancing a child’s overall sense of confidence with regard to safety, creating a responsive safety network with peers, teachers, parents, caregivers and other adults a child identifies as safe, and promotes respect for self and peers. Under the review of the Governor’s Office and the Education Cooperative Planning Team, the program was created in response to a five-year plan to develop a progressive prevention program. Targeted at students in first through fifth grades, the curriculum satisfies the educational requirements outlined in Florida Statute 39, which are proceedings relating to child abuse prevention education for children, their parents or caregivers and school personnel, and set forth by the Department of Education for health education included in the Sunshine State Standards.

The curriculum focuses on five safety rules: It’s MY body; Ask an adult if I am safe; I have choices; Tell someone; and It’s NEVER my fault. It was developed through a partnership with Arizona State University, a leader in research programs through its College of Public Programs, School of Social Work. The program is expanding state-wide as a collaborative effort with the Governor’s Office, the Florida Department of Education, the Florida Department of Health, the Florida Department of Children & Families, Ounce of Prevention and other sponsors and partners.

“Along with educating adults, we must empower children as advocates for their own safety and well-being,” said Layton. “With the knowledge and confidence to

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recognize and communicate with adults about abuse and unsafe situations, all children can have hope for a safe and happy childhood.”

To learn more about bringing this program to your city or school, contact Lynn Layton at (904) 642-0210. More information about child abuse statistics and prevention education can be found at [www.moniqueburrfoundation.org/SUBS](http://www.moniqueburrfoundation.org/SUBS).

### **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 life of a child by providing child abuse prevention education throughout the state of Florida. Since its inception, the foundation has contributed more than \$2 million to child-serving agencies in the region.

In 2010, the foundation reached more than 19,000 children in Northeast Florida and the Tampa Bay area with [Speak Up Be Safe™](#), a child abuse prevention education program that addresses safety from all forms of child abuse, bullying and internet dangers, as well as including tools for parents and school personnel. The program is in the process of expanding state-wide as 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 & Families and Ounce of Prevention and other sponsors and partners.

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

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