



For Immediate Release

Contact: The PoliteChild, Inc.

P.O. Box 3945
Bellevue, WA 98004
425.485.4089 (ph)
425.881.8310 (fx)

SocialSmarts™ Declares War on Bullies Social Skills Crucial Factor in Academic Achievement

Bellevue, Wash. – May 7, 2008 – While repeated studies conducted by Harvard University, Stanford Research Institute and the Carnegie Mellon foundation have shown that 85% of our future success depends on social skills, today another study has helped prove it directly affects our academic success, too.

The study's preliminary findings, published in Education Week ("Reading First Doesn't Help Pupils 'Get it'") are disappointing, but hardly surprising. According to the federal Reading First Impact Study just released, the \$1 billion-a-year program has shown little measurable effect on students' reading comprehension, on average.

While many factors were listed in the report as potential contributors to this lack of real improvement, nowhere was the learning environment mentioned. And, therein lies the rub. The typical level of disruption and discipline issues in today's classrooms has a major effect on student learning and academic achievement, and must be considered and addressed. Johnny will NEVER learn to read if Johnny doesn't learn to sit down, be quiet, pay attention to the teacher, and respect what his classmates are saying.

"Spending more and more money on academic programs without effectively addressing the issue of classroom discipline is like throwing rocks in the Grand Canyon," said Corinne Gregory, President and Founder of SocialSmarts™, the leading educational program dedicated to developing excellent social skills in kids of all ages — from tots to teens. SocialSmarts builds solid foundations for learning and using appropriate social behavior and developing good character through its licensed curricula and managed classes in public and private schools.

Purely "academic" solutions by themselves don't work. "If \$1B a year is spent on a program that has exhibited little improvement, the government cannot afford NOT to fund social skills education, which would make EVERYTHING so much more effective," Gregory suggests. "When schools implement our program for social skills education (www.socialsmarts.com), reading test scores increase as much as 20 points in one year. NCLB is a great concept, but the devil is in the details. You can't substantially improve academic achievement if you don't address the discipline problems in our classrooms today."

But with teachers spending 20 - 30 - 40% or more of classroom time managing behavior, how do we really expect to improve our educational outcomes? Social skills education makes great strides in this area; schools that have implemented PoliteChild programs across the board have seen dramatic increases in their test scores in the first year, and those improvements appear to continue as they remain on it.

And, there's an even bigger problem related to not addressing social skills. Children today, on average, stand a one-in-four chance to being victims of school-based violence before they reach high-school. Beyond the obvious and immediate threat to our children resulting from bullying, harassment, and intimidation, students who are afraid to attend school or are anxious about what might happen once they get there will not be able to concentrate and participate on lessons and learning. We spend billions of dollars a year on anti-bullying initiatives, yet the problems not only continue, they are escalating, and occur in increasingly younger children. "We need to begin to look at solutions that truly prevent the onset of bullying and school-violence," Gregory says, "not just look for better ways to manage the problem once it occurs. We can't keep doing the same things over and over again, and hope for a better outcome."

About The PoliteChild, Inc. The PoliteChild is the leading program dedicated to developing excellent social skills in children of all ages from toddlers to teens by building solid foundations for learning and using proper social behavior, developing good moral character, manners and etiquette through its licensed curricula and managed classes. The goal of The PoliteChild is to help parents, educators, and others develop young people with strong self-esteem and confidence, and that are socially comfortable and proficient in handling a large variety of social interactions and situations. The company is headquartered in Bellevue, WA, with a second main office in Montclair, NJ. For more about The PoliteChild, visit the company website at www.politechild.com. Copyright © 2008 The PoliteChild, Inc. All rights reserved.

####