



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Top Five Tips To Keep Your Young Kids Engaged in Safe Social Networks and Summer Learning**

**WASHINGTON, DC; June 13, 2012** — News that Facebook may allow children under 13 to join the social networking site raises important questions about online safety for our youngest Internet users and purposes of learning. All over the world, new learning standards are emerging that focus on communication and collaboration as an important means to provide the writing and media creation, critical thinking and problem solving skills essential to the 21<sup>st</sup> century work place. Proper use of social media tools in furtherance of learning has the potential to motivate and empower students in ways that traditional home and school learning methods cannot match.

ePals, which operates the largest social **learning** networking site specifically designed for children and teachers, has been focused on creating a safe and secure education experience for children for more than 15 years. Please see the following **Top Five Tips** for creating a safe and secure online environment for children.

### **1. Understand The Differences Between Consumer Social Media and Social Learning Platforms**

It's important to distinguish between social **media** platforms and social **learning** platforms. Social media tools for education take into account the safety and privacy of students and teachers and are focused on social learning, not just being social.

### **2. Steer Kids To Safe and Secure Social Networking Sites**

Find social networking sites with the [TRUSTe](#) seal and that have active tools such as content and language filters. Ensure that forums are screened for appropriate material that creates a safe and secure online environment. Only allow your kids to visit sites that are actively monitored to ensure a safe environment for kids. Examples of top kid-centric sites can be found [here](#).

### **3. Prevent Cyber Bullying**

Teach your child how to recognize and avoid cyber bullies. Only allow your children to access sites where parents, guardians and teachers have the ability to set access levels. Should a student come across a cyber bully make sure they know to report it to a trusted adult – just like they would with a playground bully.

#### **4. Keep Kids Connected To Learning Over The Summer And Extend Summer Reading Activities**

Social learning platforms like ePals, match like-minded students, teachers and parents with peers so they can learn together and stay connected over the summer. One of the biggest dangers of social networking is the potential to waste endless hours of time - make sure the social networking site your children use offers constructive learning experiences. Two great resources for safe, learning content for mobile devices and tablets are [Ladybug's Bookshelf](#) and [Cobblestone & Cricket Publications](#).

#### **5. Encourage Your Child/Student To Engage Safely With And Learn From Students From Other Cultures Around The World**

To prepare children for the challenges and opportunities they face in our increasingly interconnected world, safe, social learning tools can help connect schools and students across the globe. K-12 social learning platforms now offer embedded language translation technology to help students break down language barriers and improve their language skills.

#### **About ePals Corporation**

ePals Corporation (TSXV: SLN) is an education media company and the leading provider of safe social learning networks. Focused on the K-12 market, ePals offers elementary and secondary school administrators, teachers, students and parents worldwide a safe and secure platform for building educational communities, providing quality digital content and facilitating collaboration for effective 21st century learning. ePals' award-winning products include: the ePals Global Community™; SchoolMail®365; LearningSpace®; In2Books®, a common core eMentoring program that builds reading, writing and critical thinking skills; and popular children's educational publishing brands including Cricket® and Cobblestone®. ePals customers and partners include the International Baccalaureate, Microsoft Corporation, Dell Inc., IBM Corp., National Geographic and leading school districts across the United States and globally. ePals serves approximately 800,000 educators and reaches millions of teachers, students and parents in approximately 200 countries and territories. For the ePals Global Community™, visit [www.epals.com](http://www.epals.com).

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