

**PRESS RELEASE**

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***HOLLYWOOD IS CALLING!***

**KIDS FIRST!® ANNOUNCES FIRST-EVER  
FILM CRITICS SEARCH**

**Five Talented Winners To Be Announced During  
KIDS FIRST! Film Critics Weekend, November 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>**

**SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO** – Kids who love movies and love to talk about them are being offered the chance of a lifetime! Announced today, KIDS FIRST! has launched a three-month-long nationwide search for five kids to become official KIDS FIRST! Film Critics. The five lucky winners – who will each serve a twelve-month term as an official KIDS FIRST! Film Critic – will be sent to Red Carpet events and advance film screenings where they will review new family films, interview celebrities, and blog about upcoming films. Additionally, those who enter could have the chance to win a \$10,000 college scholarship courtesy of Stepping Stones Entertainment, which will be awarded to the film critic who writes the best review of *The Velveteen Rabbit*.

“We are very excited about this first-ever Film Critics' Campaign, which ties in directly to KIDS FIRST!'s mission. From the very beginning, we have had kids participating as jurors in our endorsement program but this campaign really takes it to a new level – giving a select group of kids the opportunity to become mini film critic celebrities. And, for one lucky kid, a \$10,000 scholarship!,” said Ranny Levy, President and Founder of KIDS FIRST!

The overall focus of the program is to teach children healthy media habits, as well as strong critical thinking, writing and public speaking skills that will stay with them for a lifetime. The KIDS FIRST! Film Critics Search runs through October 20<sup>th</sup> and is open to children between the ages of six and 15. To enter, applicants must submit both a written and videotaped review of one or more of the seven official KIDS FIRST! Film Critics' Search

titles: *Tom and Jerry Meet Sherlock Holmes*, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, *Furry Vengeance*, *The Twilight Saga: New Moon*, *The Secret of Moonacre*, *Jumping for Joy*, and *The Velveteen Rabbit*, which are available for purchase at Toys“R”Us stores, Amazon.com, SteppingStones.com, and most places where DVDs are sold. *The Velveteen Rabbit* can also be viewed on the Starz Kids & Family Channel.

The top 20 finalists will be determined by public voting of the contestants' videotaped reviews at WonderWorldTV.com, the KIDS FIRST! partner site. A panel of celebrity judges will choose the five winners.

The Search will culminate the weekend of November 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>, during the first ever **KIDS FIRST! FILM CRITICS' WEEKEND**, when the winners will be announced. Families all over America are invited to actively participate by helping to **set a world's record of one million kids “viewing and reviewing”** the same film on the same weekend together with a caring adult.

The film, *The Velveteen Rabbit* from Stepping Stones Entertainment, has been chosen for this record-breaking event. Families are encouraged to view and review this film together and engage in conversation about it, with the goal of becoming active, rather than passive, viewers.

To participate in the KIDS FIRST! FILM CRITICS' WEEKEND, families can attend local screenings hosted by film societies and community centers, view the film on Starz Kids & Family Channel, purchase the DVD online at SteppingStones.com or at their local retailers. A listing of local screenings can be found on the KIDS FIRST! website along with discussion guides for all of the search titles.

Industry supporters of The KIDS FIRST! Film Critics Campaign include Amazon.com, Anchor Bay Entertainment, Entertainment One, Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, Starz Kids & Family Channel, Stepping Stones Entertainment, Summit Entertainment, Toys“R”Us, Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment, Warner Home Video, and WonderWorld Entertainment. Stepping Stone Entertainment is donating a percentage of the sales of the *The Velveteen Rabbit* Director's Cut DVD to KIDS FIRST!.

Campaign support also comes from national nonprofit organizations that include the National Education Association, REEL Fathers, National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Council of Women's Organizations, with a cumulative membership of over 17 million.

For more information about the KIDS FIRST! Film Critics campaign, visit:  
[www.kidsfirst.org](http://www.kidsfirst.org).

### **About KIDS FIRST!®**

Founded in 1991, KIDS FIRST! is a program of the Coalition for Quality Children's Media, a national, nonprofit organization, whose mission is to teach children critical viewing skills and to increase the visibility and availability of quality children's media. A voluntary collaboration comprised of more than 100,000 media professionals, lobbyists,

policymakers, child advocates, educators, parents and families nationwide, the Coalition aims to teach children to become critical media users, help adults recognize the importance of teaching critical viewing skills to children, help children identify and be aware of outstanding media programming, and develop programs for children with special needs such as low-income, hospitalized or at-risk children.

KIDS FIRST! evaluates, rates and endorses children's films, DVDs, CDs, TV shows and games using volunteer, community-based juries of adults and children from diverse backgrounds and offers a variety of means to showcase and enhance consumer awareness of sponsored products. A KIDS FIRST! endorsement is given to titles that meet the KIDS FIRST! baseline criteria and are approved by both adult and child jurors. Reviews of endorsed or recommended titles are published on the KIDS FIRST! web site, in KIDS FIRST! News and in reviews in print and online publications including Amazon.com, Parenthood.com, *Grand Magazine*, *LA Parent*, *Macaroni Kid*, *Bay Area Parent*, *Boston Parent*, *Colorado Parent*, ParentGuide and TiVo's KidZone.

Other KIDS FIRST! programs include the KIDS FIRST! Film Festival, now in its tenth year, which showcases new and classic children's films and videos from studios as well as independent and youth filmmakers. The Festival partners with more than 150 venues that host screenings year-round to an audience of more than one million. Once a year, KIDS FIRST! Best Awards are given to films that have played at their film festivals throughout the previous year and rated the highest in their category.

Annually, KIDS FIRST! creates a Top 100 Kids Film List of films for kids between the ages of 2 and 18 that we believe have universal appeal, exhibit outstanding attributes in terms of their production values and portray values and have qualities that make them as applicable today as the day they were first released. To qualify, a film must also be currently in distribution. All Top 100 films are available on Amazon.com. Additionally, KIDS FIRST! has partnered with Toys“R”Us for an in-store program featuring the top 50 films from the Top 100 list as well as a holiday collection. You can find this program at your local Toys“R”Us store.

KIDS FIRST!'s industry supporters includes Amazon.com, Anchor Bay Entertainment, Entertainment One, Feature Films For Families, *Moving Pictures Magazine*, NAPPA, Paramount Pictures, Parenthood.com, Scholastic, Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, Starz Kids & Family Channel, Stepping Stones Entertainment, Summit Entertainment, Toys“R”Us, Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment, Universal Pictures Home Entertainment, Walt Disney Home Entertainment, Warner Home Video, and WonderWorld Entertainment.

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