

## OCTOBER IS NATIONAL BULLYING PREVENTION MONTH:

**Spookley the Square Pumpkin and PACER team up to encourage people to SPEAK UP, REACH OUT, AND BE A FRIEND in the anti-bullying movement**

***Spookley's message of celebrating our differences to help raise awareness at movie theaters, pumpkin patches, schools, malls, and museums throughout US and Canada***

September 26, 2011 – October is National Bullying Prevention Month and Spookley the Square Pumpkin and the PACER Center have teamed up with other partners to spread the word nationwide.

“The culture of bullying won’t end until people across the country take action and show children and teens that they care,” says Julie Hertzog, director of PACER’s National Bullying Prevention Center, which conceived and organizes the month-long campaign. “We love the way Spookley touches the heart and the mind with his message of tolerance and acceptance.”

Spookley author Joe Troiano, whose other Holiday Hill Farm books include *Mistletoe and the Christmas Kittens*, *Lyla the Lovesick Lady Bug*, *JellyBean the Unbreakable Egg* and *Beacon the Bright Little Firefly* said, “I’m honored that this book resonates with children, parents, teachers and librarians and thrilled that Spookley’s positive message will be used to help PACER on this very important national issue.

The month of October will be filled with Spookley-themed activities such as movie screenings, promotions, author readings and contests surrounding the anti-bullying message, specifically including:

- **PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT:** A 30-second PSA featuring National Bullying Prevention Month’s official “Spokes-Pumpkin” will be shown at movie theaters, on local television, and on the web and will encourage kids who encounter bullying to “SPEAK UP, REACH OUT, AND BE A FRIEND.”
- **MOVIE:** *Spookley the Square Pumpkin* the movie, in conjunction with Kidtoons, will be screened in 35 states from October 1<sup>st</sup> – October 31<sup>st</sup>. The animated movie will be shown in more than 200 theaters and children’s museums across the United States and Canada. The Spookley movie can also be seen on the Disney Channel. To find a theater near you, please visit [www.kidtoonfilms.com](http://www.kidtoonfilms.com)
- **SOCIAL MEDIA:** Mom blog twitter event on October 12<sup>th</sup> discussing the Anti-Bullying movement, tips, etc. <http://www.oceanhousemedia.com/>
- **FARMS:** Over 30 farm-based events - Spookley is a popular attraction at pumpkin patches and corn mazes across North America. Through events and activities including storybook readings, kiddie corn mazes, interactive stage shows, and school field trips, Spookley entertains, educates and inspires children on farms throughout the fall harvest season. To find Spookley activities and merchandise at a pumpkin patch near you, please visit [www.spookley.com](http://www.spookley.com) or [www.facebook.com/spookley](http://www.facebook.com/spookley)
- **SCHOOLS:** Through Spookley book readings and lesson plans used by teachers nationwide, students across the country learn about tolerance and diversity and discuss ways to prevent and deal with bullying.

- **RETAIL:** Over 1 million *The Legend of Spookley the Square Pumpkin* books have been sold to date and it is a top selling Halloween title annually. The book will be featured at Barnes & Noble stores, online, and through Scholastic Book Clubs this Fall. In addition to the book, Spookley's story is available as an app for iTunes/iPad/iPhone, Android, and the Nook.

Additional key elements of the program include:

- 5% of 2011 proceeds received by Holiday Hill from *The Legend of Spookley the Square Pumpkin* books will be donated to PACER
- Special dates will include: 10/1 The start of Anti-Bullying Month with Run, Walk, Roll Against Bullying <http://www.pacer.org/bullying/nbpm/runwalkroll/> and 10/12 Unity Day where people will be encouraged to wear orange to stand up for people who have been bullied <http://www.pacer.org/bullying/nbpm/unity-day.asp> 10/26 Unity Dance Day <http://www.pacer.org/bullying/nbpm/unity-dance-day.asp>
- Spookley resources will be available at the PACER website [www.pacer.org/bullying](http://www.pacer.org/bullying).

#### **About Spookley the Square Pumpkin and Holiday Hill Farm**

*The Legend of Spookley the Square Pumpkin*, written and created by Joe Troiano, tells the story of a square pumpkin living in a round pumpkin patch on Holiday Hill Farm. Spookley faces ridicule from his patch-mates but overcomes this when he saves the patch from being destroyed by a terrible storm. All the pumpkins in the patch learn that the things that make you different are the things that make you special.

The animated classic *Spookley the Square Pumpkin*, which was adapted from the book, will air again this October on the Disney Channel in the US and abroad. The *Spookley* story is also available as an app for the iPad/iPhone, Android and Nook platforms. *Spookley lives on Holiday Hill Farm*, a world of story-telling magic that is also the setting for Joe Troiano's storybook classics *Mistletoe and the Christmas Kittens*, *Lyla the Lovesick Ladybug*, *JellyBean the Unbreakable Egg* and *Beacon the Bright Little Firefly*.

#### **About PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center**

PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center provides creative and interactive resources that are designed to benefit all students, including students with disabilities. PACER offers educators, students, families, and individuals the tools they need to address bullying in schools, recreational programs or community organizations. For more information, visit [PACER.org/bullying](http://PACER.org/bullying) or call [952-838-9000](tel:952-838-9000).

#### **Kidtoon Films Inc., A Division of Cinedigm Digital Cinema Corp:**

For more than seven years, Kidtoons has been captivating audiences with family-friendly weekend matinees in nearly 200 movie theatres across the nation. With a new program released each month, parents rely on Kidtoons to provide wholesome, quality, age appropriate entertainment for their kids aged 3-7. Millions of young children have been introduced to the theatre-going experience with Kidtoons.

**For more information on this partnership, please contact Susan Martin, Matchbook Company, [susan@matchbookcompany.com](mailto:susan@matchbookcompany.com), 646.429.8905**