



**NBC NEWS' ANN CURRY AND BRIAN WILLIAMS, ALONG WITH
SESAME STREET®'S BIG BIRD, STAR IN SPROUT'S FIRST PSA TO LAUNCH
"KINDNESS COUNTS" CAMPAIGN**

Philadelphia, PA – August 15, 2011 – Ann Curry, co-anchor of NBC News' *TODAY*, America's number one morning news program; Brian Williams, anchor and managing editor of *NBC Nightly News*, America's leading evening newscast; and everyone's favorite feathered friend, Big Bird, star in 24-hour preschool television channel Sprout's first PSA created for "Kindness Counts," the network's new multiplatform, prosocial initiative designed support the development of empathy in preschoolers. Marking the official kick-off of "Kindness Counts," the PSA premiered this morning during *TODAY*.

Two additional PSAs starring everyone's favorite purple dinosaur Barney® and Nina and Star from Sprout's popular *The Good Night Show*™ will debut on Sprout in September. All of the spots in the campaign also feature preschoolers demonstrating real acts of kindness. The "Kindness Counts" PSAs will be aired nationally on Sprout and other channels and featured online at SproutOnline.com.

In addition to this series of PSAs, the "Kindness Counts" campaign will also include digital and social media components, programming tie-ins and local extensions – all directed to parents and caregivers of preschoolers – with the ultimate goal of logging one million acts of kindness reported to Sprout from families all across the country. Families will be encouraged to visit the "Kindness Counts" microsite at SproutOnline.com to add their child's act of kindness to the Kindness Counter. Various acts of kindness sent in from Sprout families nationwide will be highlighted regularly on the air during Sprout's daily live morning show, *The Sunny Side Up Show*. Parents will also be able to find articles and expert advice on the value and importance of developing empathy in young children, printable materials that daycare providers or families can use at home or in school to track their own small acts of kindness, and links to games and activities at SproutOnline.com that celebrate the spirit of kindness.

A recent poll conducted by Sprout showed that 83% of parents surveyed were concerned about their preschoolers potentially being bullied or bullying others. Building empathy with young children can help encourage them to consider other people's feelings and offer help or expressions of understanding – something as simple as a hug, getting a towel to help clean up a spill, or sharing a box of crayons with a friend.

"As bullying among school-aged children continues to be a growing concern for communities and parents across the nation, it is now more critical than ever – and never too soon – to start building empathy in young, preschool-aged children," said Sandy Wax, president of Sprout. "Empathy and kindness are a

consistent theme with Sprout's gold-standard programming and trusted characters, so Sprout is uniquely positioned to deliver our 'Kindness Counts' message to families of preschoolers all across the country."

For additional information on Sprout programs or schedules, or to [play games](#), download [free coloring pages](#) or find great [activities for kids](#), visit [SproutOnline.com](#). To find out where Sprout is available in your area, call 1.8.SPROUT.411 or go to [SproutPlease.com](#).

About Sprout®

Available in over 50 million homes, Sprout is the first 24-hour preschool destination available on TV, on demand and online for children ages 2-5 and their parents and caregivers. The 24-hour digital channel, which launched in September 2005 along with the website ([SproutOnline.com](#)), is the only channel that follows the day of a preschooler from breakfast to bedtime with its distinctive, interactive programming and original hosted blocks. Sprout's VOD offering is the #1 on demand service for younger children with over one billion views.

Sprout is a partnership among NBCUniversal, HIT Entertainment, PBS and Sesame Workshop. Its program lineup of gold-standard, curriculum-based preschool shows includes: *Sesame Street®*, *Bob the Builder™*, *Barney & Friends™*, *The Wiggles®*, *Thomas & Friends™*, *Caillou®*, *The Berenstain Bears™*, *Roary the Racing Car™*, *dirtgirlworld* and more.

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