



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**SPROUT® MAKES A SPLASH WITH *SUMMER FUN FRIDAYS* AND THE  
WORLD TELEVISION PREMIERE OF *FRANCES***

**Based on Russell Hoban's beloved books, *Frances* is Co-Produced by The Jim Henson  
Company and HIT Entertainment**

**Winners in Sprout's *Summer Fun Fridays* weekly contest to receive Flip Video  
camcorder from Pure Digital Technologies**

**Philadelphia, PA – May 28, 2008** – PBS KIDS Sprout, the first 24-hour preschool destination available on TV, on demand and online for kids ages 2-5 and their parents and caregivers, will launch *Summer Fun Fridays*, featuring two Sprout miniseries in a double-feature matinee every Friday from noon to 3:00 p.m. ET, beginning June 20 and continuing through August 29. Making its world premiere in this program block at noon on June 20 is *Frances* from The Jim Henson Company and HIT Entertainment.

*Frances* is a preschool comedy series based on the classic Russell Hoban books about a precocious and high-spirited badger by the name of Frances. *Frances* is brought to life through innovative, state of the art digital puppetry and vibrantly animated using the Henson Digital Puppetry Studio, a groundbreaking technology which allows performers to puppeteer and voice digital characters in real time.

*Frances* is a celebration of the preschool spirit – with all its dramatic highs and lows. Like many young children, Frances is fun-loving, determined and highly imaginative, expressing herself through original poems and songs. In fact, each episode features two songs – about feelings ranging from pride in a new toy to frustration in having a baby sister, all invented and sung by Frances. Joining Frances in her daily adventures are her little sister, Gloria, her mom and dad, and her best friend Albert.

Additional features for *Summer Fun Fridays*, include animated series *Brambly Hedge*, Sesame Street®'s *Panwapa* and *Percy the Park Keeper*.

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Beginning in June, children and their parents will be encouraged to participate in Sprout's *Summer Fun Fridays* contest by submitting a drawing on [SproutOnline.com](http://SproutOnline.com) of their favorite family summer activity, whether it's swimming at the beach, eating ice cream or catching fireflies. Winning entries will be turned into an animated mini-movie and shown on Sprout. A new winner will be announced each Friday during television's only live show for preschoolers, *The Sunny Side Up Show*. All weekly winners will also receive a new Flip Video camcorder from Pure Digital Technologies ([www.theflip.com](http://www.theflip.com)). Slim-sized to fit neatly into any pocket, the Flip Video camcorder provides unmatched portability and simplicity for capturing, editing and sharing video --anytime, anywhere. Complete details and official rules for the contest are available at [www.SproutOnline.com](http://www.SproutOnline.com).

For additional information on Sprout programs or schedules, visit [SproutOnline.com](http://SproutOnline.com). To find out where Sprout is available in your area, call 1.866.9.SPROUT.

High-resolution images are available in the media gallery at <http://www.fishwithfeet.com/mediagallery.htm>.

### **About Sprout®**

PBS KIDS Sprout, the first 24-hour preschool destination available on TV, on demand and online for kids ages 2-5 and their parents and caregivers, was created as a partnership among Comcast Corporation, HIT Entertainment, PBS and Sesame Workshop. Since debuting its video on demand (VOD) service in April 2005, Sprout has become the #1 On Demand service for younger children, generating over 400 million orders. The 24-hour digital channel, which launched in September 2005 along with the website ([SproutOnline.com](http://SproutOnline.com)), is the only channel that follows the day of child from breakfast to bedtime with its distinctive programming. Currently, Sprout is available in 40 million unique households.

The network's program lineup of gold-standard, curriculum-based children's shows includes: *Sesame Street*®, *Bob the Builder*™, *Barney & Friends*™, *Thomas & Friends*™, *Angelina Ballerina*™, *Caillou*®, *The Berenstain Bears*™, *Jay Jay the Jet Plane*®, *Teletubbies*™, *Dragon Tales*™, *Pingu*™, *Make Way For Noddy*™, *The Hoobs*™, *Fifi and the Flowertots*™ and more.

### **About HIT Entertainment**

HIT Entertainment, owned by private equity investment group Apax Partners, is one of the world's leading independent children's entertainment producers and rights-owners. HIT's portfolio includes properties, such as *Barney*™, *Bob the Builder*™, *Thomas & Friends*™, *Pingu*™, *Fireman Sam*™, *Angelina Ballerina*™ and *Rainbow Magic*™. HIT represents Chapman Entertainment's *Fifi and the Flowertots*™ and *Roary the Racing Car*™ in North America and Japan, as well as *Wallace & Gromit*™, *Shaun the Sheep*™ and Aardman Classics from Aardman Animations. HIT also acts as a worldwide representative for The Jim Henson Company's library of classic family brands and as representative for *The Wiggles*® in the UK. Launched in 1989, HIT's lines of business span television and video production, content distribution, publishing, consumer products licensing and live events and has operations in the UK, US, Canada, Hong Kong and Japan. HIT is a part-owner of US-based preschool channel, PBS KIDS Sprout<sup>SM</sup>, and international preschool channel JimJam, (outside of the US, UK and China). For more information, visit [www.hitentertainment.com](http://www.hitentertainment.com)

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THE JIM HENSON COMPANY

The Jim Henson Company has remained an established leader in family entertainment for over 50 years and is recognized worldwide as an innovator in puppetry, animatronics and digital animation. Best known as creators of the world famous Muppets, Henson has received over 50 Emmy Awards and nine Grammy Awards. Recent credits include the Emmy® nominated "Sid the Science Kid," "Dinosaur Train," "Wilson & Ditch: Digging America" and "Pajanimals." Features include "The Dark Crystal," "Labyrinth," "MirrorMask," and "Unstable Fables" and television productions include "Fraggle Rock" and the sci-fi cult series "Farscape."

With additional locations in New York and London, The Jim Henson Company is headquartered in Los Angeles on the historic Charlie Chaplin lot, complete with soundstage and postproduction facilities. Independently owned and operated by the five adult children of founder Jim Henson, the Company is also home to Jim Henson's Creature Shop™, a pre-eminent character-building and visual effects group with international film, television and advertising clients, as well as Henson Recording Studios, one of the music industry's top recording facilities known for its world-class blend of state-of-the-art and vintage equipment. The Company's Henson Alternative brand has recently announced the national tour of "Stuffed and Unstrung," a live puppet improvisational show named one of the top 10 "Best Stage Shows of 2010" by *Entertainment Weekly*.

<http://www.henson.com>

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