



**A TEACHER IN THE LIVING ROOM?
Educational Media for Babies, Toddlers and Preschoolers**

**Speaker Biographies and Contact Information
December 14, 2005**

SUZANNE BARCHERS, ED.D.

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Suzanne Barchers began her career as a teacher and administrator, working in primarily urban settings across the country. She also served as education director and deputy director of the Children's Museum of Denver.

After the publication in 1990 of her first book, *Creating and Managing the Literate Classroom*, she became acquisitions editor for Teacher Ideas Press, a division of Libraries Unlimited. Dr. Barchers next developed a line of books for teachers, parents, and children for Fulcrum Publishing, a trade publishing company in Colorado. From 1990 to 1999, she served as an affiliate faculty member at the University of Colorado, Denver.

Dr. Barchers has written extensively for the education market, completing two college textbooks, 19 teacher resource books, 28 books for LeapFrog and LeapFrog SchoolHouse, bringing her total to 49 books. She has also written more than 50 articles, a geography CD-rom, and a keyboard curriculum. She is a seasoned speaker, having presented at regional, national, and international conferences. Before coming to LeapFrog, Dr. Barchers was Managing Editor at Weekly Reader in Stamford, CT. She also serves on the board of directors for the Association of Educational Publishers (EdPress).

Dr. Barchers has a bachelor's degree in elementary Education from Eastern Illinois University, a master's degree in education from Oregon State University, and a doctorate of education in curriculum and design from the University of Colorado, Boulder.

WARREN BUCKLEITNER, PH.D.

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Warren Buckleitner is the founding editor of *Children's Technology Review (CTR)*, a periodical designed to provide systematic reviews of children's interactive media products. In addition to CTR, he provides reviews for *PARADE*, *The New York Times*, *BCBF Newslines*, *CNN*, *Scholastic Parent & Child* and *Nick Jr* magazine.

He is a former preschool and elementary teacher, and was a demonstration teacher and Sr. Consultant for the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation. He has conducted in-services for teachers and librarians across the United States on teaching techniques and classroom design, and has been a featured speaker at FETC, E3, NECC, Dust or Magic, the Bologna Children's Book Fair and others.

Dr. Buckleitner holds a BS in Elementary Education (cum laude, Central Michigan University), an MA in Human Development with an emphasis in developmental education (Pacific Oaks College), and a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology: Learning Technology & Culture (Michigan State University). His dissertation examined the relationship between interface design and child engagement.

He is a trustee of the Flemington Free Public Library, and is the founder of the Mediatech Foundation, a non-profit community technology center located in his hometown of Flemington, NJ, where he lives with his wife and two daughters.

SANDRA CALVERT, PH.D.

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Sandra L. Calvert, the Director of the Children's Digital Media Center, received her Ph.D. in Developmental and Child Psychology from the University of Kansas. Dr. Calvert is a Professor of Psychology and a core member of the Communication, Culture, and Technology Program at Georgetown University. She is author of *Children's Journeys Through the Information Age* (McGraw Hill, 1999), and co-editor with Amy B. Jordan and Rodney R. Cocking of *Children in the Digital Age: Influences of Electronic Media on Development* (Praeger, 2002).

Dr. Calvert's interdisciplinary work in the information and technology area, spanning the fields of psychology, communications, linguistics, and education, seeks to improve the well-being of children and adolescents by bridging the gap between knowledge generation and knowledge application. For example, she examined social policy issues revolving around the Children's Television Act, in which broadcasters are legally required to provide educational and informational television programs for children. At CDMC, she is also examining the roles that interactivity and identity play in children's learning from educational media and from heroic portrayals of DVD content.

Dr. Calvert is a fellow of the American Psychological Association. She served on the Advisory Panel for Excellence in Children's Television for the Annenberg Public Policy Center at University of Pennsylvania, on the Advisory Board for the Center for Media Education, and on the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Tools and Strategies for Protecting Children from Pornography and Other Objectionable Content on the Internet. She has consulted for organizations such as Nickelodeon Online, Sesame Workplace, Blue's Clues, and Sega of America to influence the development of children's television programs, computer and Internet software, and video games.

DIMITRI CHRISTAKIS, M.D., M.P.H.

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Dimitri Christakis, M.D., M.P.H., is a pediatrician and epidemiologist at the Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center in Seattle. He is a graduate of Yale University and the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. Dr. Christakis is an Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Director of the Child Health Institute at the University of Washington, and Associate Editor of the *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*. The author of over 100 peer reviewed publications and book chapters, his current research interest is the effect of media usage on young children's cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and social development. His most recent studies in this area have found an association between television and video viewing before the age of three years and attentional and cognitive problems at age seven.

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Julia Fitzgerald is the Vice President of Marketing for VTech Electronics North America, LLC. VTech is a world leader of age-appropriate learning toys and creator of the Electronic Learning Products (ELP) Category. A 15-year veteran in marketing, Ms. Fitzgerald joined VTech in 2001 and was instrumental in the successful launch of the V.Smile TV Learning System (named Toy of the Year 2004 by the Toy Industry Association) and V.Smile Pocket, which was introduced earlier this year.

Prior to joining VTech, Ms. Fitzgerald led the marketing team at Hallmark for the launch of the Hallmark Expressions brand. Additionally, she served on the marketing team at Mead, a leading global creator of consumer and office products.

Ms. Fitzgerald holds a master's degree in business administration from Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, and lives in a suburb of Chicago with her husband and two children. An avid runner, Ms. Fitzgerald enjoys spending her free time traveling with her family and competing in local races.

MARCIA GRIMSLEY

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Marcia Grimsley, Senior Producer for *The Brainy Baby Company*, has a dual background in both television-video production, and early-childhood education. She holds degrees in both Radio/TV

Communications from Stephen F. Austin State University, and in Education from the University of Houston, both in Texas.

Her past production work includes that of Senior Producer for *UT/TV (The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston)*, corporate and commercial production work under her own company, *Daddy-Mac Productions*, and corporate production work as Producer / Project Manager for *The Creative Network, Inc.* in Atlanta.

As an educator, Mrs. Grimsley has spent several years in both the public school system teaching 1st and 3rd grades, and in the private-school sector working with toddlers, preschoolers, and young special-needs children with a variety of learning disabilities.

As Senior Producer for The Brainy Baby Company, Mrs. Grimsley has been responsible for the launch of over 40 titles under the *Brainy Baby* and *Small Fry Productions* lines. She is involved in managing the creative and educational content of all Brainy Baby videos, books, games, and other licensed products, ensuring age-appropriateness, creativity, and solid educational content. She is also looking into emerging markets and expanding the Brainy Baby brand into future production lines such as *Brainy Kids* and *Mustard Seeds*.

Mrs. Grimsley is also the mother of two children under age 5, which makes her hands-on experience that much "closer to home!"

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Gary Knell is President and Chief Executive Officer of Sesame Workshop. Mr. Knell leads the non-profit educational organization in its mission to create innovative, engaging content that maximizes the educational power of all media to help children reach their highest potential. He has been instrumental in focusing the organization on Sesame Street's global mission, including groundbreaking co-productions in South Africa, Russia, China and Egypt.

Previously, Mr. Knell was Managing Director of Manager Media International, a print and multimedia publishing company based in Bangkok, Hong Kong and Singapore. In this capacity, he oversaw the development of the monthly business magazine *Asia Inc.*, the daily Asian-based newspaper *Asia Times*, and several trade publications.

He also has served as Senior Vice President and General Counsel at WNET/Channel 13 in New York, was Counsel to the U.S. Senate Judiciary and Governmental Affairs Committees, and worked in the California State Legislature and Governor's Office.

Mr. Knell is a Member of the Council on Foreign Relations, serves on the Board of Governors of the National Geographic Education Foundation and is a Board Member of AARP Services, Inc., providing high quality products and services serving the needs and interests of those 50 and older; NetAid, a UN founded organization using technology to fight global poverty; Business for Diplomatic Action, promoting public diplomacy through the private sector; and American Public Television. He is also an advisor to WFUV, public radio at Fordham University, the Annenberg School of Communications at USC, and Common Sense Media. He is a frequent spokesperson in the media, appearing in numerous venues, including CNN, Fox News, NBC Today Show, NPR, and CNBC.

Mr. Knell holds a BA in Political Science and Journalism from the University of California at Los Angeles and a JD from Loyola University School of Law.

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Victoria Rideout, M.A. is a Vice President at the Kaiser Family Foundation and director of the Foundation's Program for the Study of Entertainment Media and Health. Ms. Rideout oversees the Foundation's research agenda on children, media and health. She has directed numerous studies on topics such as: media use by children and teens; the nature of sexual content on television; the impact of health content embedded in entertainment media; use of media ratings and parental advisories; parental opinions of TV and other media; teens' use of the Internet for health information; and viewers' responses to public service campaigns. She has also conducted numerous focus groups of children and teens regarding sexual content of media. In addition, Ms. Rideout helped establish several national youth-focused public education campaigns in partnership with popular TV networks such as MTV, BET and UPN. The public service ads and full-length programming she helped develop have received numerous awards, including a National Emmy Award for best public service announcement, a Cine Golden Eagle Award, and several Telly and Aegis Awards for advertising.

Ms. Rideout's research has been published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, *Health Affairs*, *American Behavioral Scientist*, and other national peer-reviewed journals. She has testified on children and media before the U.S. Congress, the Federal Trade Commission, the Institute of Medicine, and the Federal Communications Commission. Ms. Rideout graduated with honors from Harvard University and received her M.A. in American history from Syracuse University.