

THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT! PBS KIDS® STUDY FINDS MOBILE APPS ARE NEW SOURCE OF LEARNING

App Helps Kids Improve Vocabulary As Much As 31 Percent

ARLINGTON, VA, MAY 25, 2010 – As parents search for ways to make the most of the travel time during family road trips this summer, the answer might be as close as their pocket. A new study from PBS KIDS finds that mobile apps can provide an engaging, educational experience for kids. PBS KIDS today announced initial results of a study on the educational benefits of mobile gaming apps in conjunction with the [7th Annual Games for Change Festival](#) in New York. A Rockman et al study found that vocabulary improved as much as 31 percent in children ages three to seven who played with the popular [MARTHA SPEAKS app](#), which was created by series producer WGBH.

The study findings are particularly relevant as smart phones and mobile devices have become increasingly popular among families and parents are faced with a proliferation of mobile apps designed for kids. According to a [recent Nielsen study](#), smart phone usage is 12% higher in households with children than other households.

“Mobile apps can be a great learning tool in the hands of children,” said Lesli Rotenberg, SVP, Children’s Media, PBS. “This research is important in helping to better understand and guide the development of new apps that improve the value of children’s screen time with significant educational outcomes.”

Parents echo this desire for fun, yet educational, screen time, with more than half of those participating in the study saying that it is “very important” for their child to learn from media they use. “These initial study results, and the incredible interest in our apps from parents and kids, indicate that mobile learning is a new and crucial educational frontier,” said Jason Seiken, SVP Interactive, Product Development, and Innovation, PBS. “We will continue to lead the charge in delivering innovative educational tools that parents have come to expect from PBS.”

“The MARTHA SPEAKS Dog Party app successfully extends our efforts to build oral vocabulary for four- to seven-year-olds, a core goal of MARTHA SPEAKS,” said WGBH Vice President of Children’s Media and Educational Programming Brigid Sullivan.

About the MARTHA SPEAKS Dog Party App

MARTHA SPEAKS Dog Party features four different games. In the “Chow Time” game, kids build vocabulary by helping dogs clean their plates, identifying different shapes (“rectangular,” “triangular”), patterns and colors, and objects (from “astronauts” to “instruments” and “vehicles”). Martha, the world’s only talking dog, explains what each word means. The app is based on the popular PBS KIDS series featuring Martha, a

beloved family dog who eats a bowl of alphabet soup and gains the power of human speech. For more information about PBS KIDS apps, please visit PBSKIDS.org/mobile.

Study Methodology

The study focused on a group of 90 Title One children ages three to seven. Each child played approximately 2.5 hours on the MARTHA SPEAKS app across the two week study period (approximately 5 hours total time spent on the iPod in this two week period), playing with the app 11 times. This was self initiated time, not prescribed.

About PBS KIDS

PBS KIDS offers all children the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television, online and community-based programs. PBS is a nonprofit media enterprise owned and operated by the nation's nearly 360 public television stations, serving more than 124 million people on-air and online each month.

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