

Smyths Toys Helps Disadvantaged Children With Computer Access

Toy company makes donation to e-Learning Foundation charity

August 28 2008: Smyths Toys, a chain of toy stores in Greater London, has made a donation to the e-Learning Foundation, a charity set up to ensure that all school children in the UK have access to technology for their studies.

The £10,000 donation will enable the e-Learning Foundation to support projects in UK schools to provide disadvantaged children with home access to learning technologies for their studies and ensure they do not lose out from the digital divide.

Despite living in a digital age, where technology is part of everyday life, an astonishing 1.35 million ** school age children in the UK live in a household with no computer and a staggering 2.77 million do not have Internet access either. Over 30% of these children come from single parent households, many of whom live in very deprived communities.

“Having personal access to a computer and the Internet at home not only supports children in their studies and personal development, but also engages the wider family,” commented Barry Doherty, Marketing Manager at Smyths Toys. “As specialists in educational and creative toys we put a high value on innovation in learning. We are therefore delighted in being able to support the e-Learning Foundation in its invaluable work in erasing the digital divide “.

“This kind donation from Smyths Toys will enable us to support further sustainable e-learning projects in schools around the country, ensuring that children have the technology skills required to take them forward in life and help further strengthen home/school links,” commented Valerie Thompson, Chief Executive of the e-Learning Foundation.

“Increasingly, low income families are finding themselves on the wrong side of the digital divide and many children in the UK, through no fault of their own, are being hobbled in their future development through lack of IT access for their studies,” added Thompson. “Such access should be a right, not a privilege”.

End.

pressrelease



Notes for Editors:

** Figures taken from the National Statistics Family Spending Survey 06-07

About Smyths Toys:

Smyths Toys is a leading provider of children's entertainment products with 26 stores in Ireland, six stores in Greater London and one in South West England, with more sites planned to open. The company's goal is to provide consumers with an extensive range of products at competitive prices.

There is something to suit every age at Smyths from nursery products to preschool, toys for all ages as well as bikes, video games, DVDs, books and activity kits to encourage learning and develop creativity for all ages.

About the e-Learning Foundation

The e-Learning Foundation was launched in 2001, to ensure that every schoolchild in the UK should have home access to learning technologies when and where they want to learn.

The Foundation, a registered charity, aims to bridge the digital divide and ensure that all children, irrespective of their background, can have the same access to technology for learning at home as their better off peers. The estimated cost of this runs into £billions, so unlikely to be provided by Government alone.

The Foundation is funded through the public, private and third sector in the form of Government grants, commercial sponsorship, grants and donations.

Registered Charity No. 1086306

Interviews available on request. PR Contact: Jan Howells at the e-Learning Foundation on 01932 796036 or e-mail jan@e-learningfoundation.co.uk