

Fact Sheet

Welcome to the National Outreach Campaign!

The Series

It's A BIG BIG WORLD is an innovative new preschool series from award-winning television series creator Mitchell Kriegman (*Bear in the Big Blue House*, *Clarissa Explains It All*). The series, geared toward 3 to 6 year-old children, is produced in



"Shadowmation," a visually striking technique that combines computer generated animation, puppetry and animatronics to create a uniquely rich world of animal characters, exciting stories, and world music rhythms. Science and geography concepts are explored and reinforced through engaging stories and songs, tapping into a child's natural fascination with a world much bigger than his or her immediate surroundings. Educational advisors help to ensure that the content and program format are age-appropriate.



It's A BIG BIG WORLD is a half-hour daily show (40 episodes) in the core PBS KIDS lineup.

Outreach Campaign

Outreach Extensions is collaborating with PBS and Big Big Productions to design and implement a targeted outreach campaign, in association with It's A BIG BIG WORLD, utilizing themes, concepts, and characters from this exciting new series. The campaign will foster the relationships public television stations already have with parents, educators, and local institutions to engage 3 to 6 year-old children in discovering the diversity, mysteries, and wonders of the world. Through a station activities program, the campaign will extend the educational value of It's A BIG BIG WORLD and help to build sustainability for local engagement with the series in diverse settings.

Campaign Resources

Station Outreach Toolkit CD – Mailed early in July 2006, the comprehensive Toolkit supported outreach project start-up for stations. It provided background on the series and its educational philosophy, outreach ideas and potential local partners, and a School Readiness Workshop. The latter was designed for educators and childcare providers and adaptable for parents. Workshop goals reinforced that science is a process of discovery; strategies for educators suggested how to foster science literacy in children. Content offered a 90 minute workshop, half-hour extension activities, a list of suggested children's books, and an evaluation survey for workshop participants. Additional content on the Toolkit CD were Handouts for Parents and Teachers (2) and Activity Sheets for Kids (6) that had previously been developed by Big Big Productions.

Station Community Engagement – The focus of the national outreach campaign is station community engagement. Key objectives include raising awareness about the educational content of the series and Web site among parents, teachers, and caregivers; and conducting hands-on discovery learning experiences for 3 to 6 year-old children in association with a broad range of local partners. Two phases of engagement were supported, managed by Outreach Extensions, which also provided extensive technical assistance to support stations' planning, implementation, and evaluation.

- **Phase One:** Station activities began on September 1, 2006. Ten stations reached 2,104,892 people through their projects.
- **Phase Two:** Station activities began on January 15, 2007. Station impressions through outreach on-air, events, promotions, partner activities, materials disseminated, and Web site totaled 4,677,200 for the 20 stations.

Stations successfully used the resource materials, Toolkit ideas and School Readiness Workshop, and BBW Web site resources. They designed events and offered hands-on activities for 3 to 6 year-old children and their parents in collaboration with local partners such as museums, zoos/aquaria, science/discovery centers, conservation/ecology programs, community centers, libraries, or education programs. In selecting their partners, sustainability was important – to draw audiences, disseminate materials broadly, and continue to conduct activities. Stations praised IT’S A BIG BIG WORLD for its value in positioning them in their communities as strong sources of educational programming and resources for children, parents, child care providers, and teachers. They plan to continue using BBW and its resources as part of their ongoing educational workshops and events.

Activities & Learning Resources CD/DVD – The CD/DVD package, sent to stations in early November 2006, provides tools to teach young children about science, nature, geography, and the environment. CD contents include a welcome letter including tips on how to use it, background materials, 15 activities in English and Spanish, and bilingual printables such as an invitation and certificate. The DVD begins with a video greeting from Snook and includes six episode clips that can be used in conjunction with the 15 activities. Stations may order additional copies of the package for local partners, schools, and other institutions. In addition to using the content in their parent/childcare workshops and events, stations can incorporate it into their electronic parent/education newsletters and on their Web sites.

Activities Poster – A colorful poster (33.5” x 22”) presents ways that kids can take care of the big, big world around them, based on conservation and recycle/reuse themes. One side showcases images/characters from the series, with sayings like “Turn the lights off when you go.” The reverse side provides five step-by-step fun activities (Be a Big, Big World Helper; Nature Walk; Arts and Crafts, Naturally; Feed the Birds; and Celebrate with Music) as well a Big, Big World Helper Checklist – all in English and Spanish. Posters were sent to stations in April 2007 for distribution to parents, caregivers, and teachers.

Station Project Highlights

- **Station One** – Project activities included workshops, the integration of materials into the station’s ongoing RTL and Train-the-Trainer programs, and community events. After participating in IT’S A BIG BIG WORLD classroom and home-based assignments, parents were confident enough to lead their children in simple science experiments.
- **Station Two** – Station served rural, low income, and at-risk families as well as viewers’ families through Family Learning Parties in its studios and in collaboration with community partners. Surveys showed that 93 percent of parents reported feeling more comfortable exploring science and environmental topics with their children. Working with partners strengthened the station’s ties to the communities and people they serve.
- **Station Three** – The station built a collaborative relationship with a new partner, the local zoo, and conducted a series of School Readiness Workshops. After attending the station’s presentation of the IT’S A BIG BIG WORLD School Readiness Workshop at the local area Family Child Care Association Conference, the president of the state Family Child Care Association asked the station to present the workshop at the Association’s national conference in the summer of 2007.
- **Station Four** – The station conducted Science Sunday and Family Learning Nights in partnership with the Children’s Museum and a series of School Readiness Workshops. The Nature and Science Center brought live animals to the museum events for children to experience. Of 292 survey respondents (parents), 98 percent said their participation in the IT’S A BIG BIG WORLD hands-on activities at the museum had increased their interest in doing science activities with their children.

- **Station Five** – With its community partner, a Wildlife Adventure organization, the station hosted a Family Day in conjunction with a special Smithsonian exhibit on the rainforest. Other activities included workshops for teachers and parents. The station also created a Kids Club IT'S A BIG BIG WORLD Traveling Bag, which was made available to members of its Kids Club to share with their classmates for a two-week period.
- **Station Six** – The station conducted its outreach project in conjunction with second grade classes in high-needs schools participating in its Reading Partnership Project. The workshop helped parents learn the power of television as a learning tool, and by viewing IT'S A BIG BIG WORLD episodes, reading a related book, and working together on a hands-on activity at the workshop, children and parents both became more interested in science. As a result of the workshop, parents and family members became more comfortable working with teachers and administrators in the school and expressed eagerness in returning to the school for more workshops to help them become more active in their children's education.
- **Station Seven** – "Exploring Our Big, Big World" workshops were conducted at a Ready to Lead in Literacy Fall Conference and in classes for pre-service education students at the local university. IT'S A BIG BIG WORLD was the featured event at the conference; the workshop helped early childhood educators, parents, and child care providers learn about the series and how to implement curriculum ideas with young children. The workshop materials, especially those provided to pre-service teachers (now doing their practicum assignments), are being used in over 20 area classrooms.
- **Station Eight** – The station introduced more than 86,000 individuals to the IT'S A BIG BIG WORLD series and Web site. Hands-on activities at events and workshops encouraged families and early childhood professionals to support and participate in children's exploration and discovery learning. As a result of the workshops, early childhood professionals reported an increase in their comfort with science instruction, an increase in their confidence in dealing with science, and an increase in their interest in science.
- **Station Nine** – The station reported that IT'S A BIG BIG WORLD is a "big success" in its community. Teachers who did not know about the series are adding it to their classroom agendas and librarians are adding it to their after-school and summer reading programs. Head Start parents are now familiar with the characters and are working with their children to explore geography, nature, and science at home.



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