

Cookies Are Not Just for Santa: Digital Dogs Track Data Crumbs In "Secret of the Vanishing Bones"

Media Literacy Inquiry Skills Should Be Atop Everyone's Smart List

SAN MATEO, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, December 7, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- With almost 60%* of holiday shoppers gifting electronics this season and the most popular 'smart' toys connected to the internet, parents need reminded 'sharing is not always caring' when it comes to data privacy and tracker tech.

Just in time for the holidays, [The Secret of the Vanishing Bones: Tracking the Data Trail](#) helps kids (and their parents!) develop digital detective skills through the story itself, as a playful pack of dogs sleuth, sniff around and dig deeper into questions about media messages and the technology being used, learning data privacy tips and developing digital detective skills to solve the mystery.

Building on her national media literacy expertise as founder of [Shaping Youth](#), focusing on media and marketing's impact on kids, author Amy Jussel said:

"During the holiday season, parents are often sharing family photos, buying presents and handing over kids data without considering who's collecting it, who's selling it, who's using it to track behaviors and why," Jussel said.

"From Kidfluencers on YouTube to TikTok teens, kids need to develop the ability to detect, discern and reflect on the media coming their way and make a habit of asking themselves basics like, 'Who made this and why? Who is paying for it? How does this site know what I like? Why is this toy following me all over the web?' Key questions help kids form a strong foundation to prompt inquiry," she continued.



Author Amy Jussel with Secret of the Vanishing Bones: Tracking the Data Trail, a new media literacy children's book series

Jussel feels strongly that it's not just children that need to learn...parents and educators are often using tech without realizing how tech is using them.

"Cookies are not just for Santa...so I created holiday coloring pages featuring the Digital Dogs characters to build inquiry around tech toys and connectivity...kids and parents need to know where all their swipes, likes, purchases, and movements are being stored, for how long and for what purpose," Jussel said.

Anyone can download the coloring activities for FREE to boost their data privacy awareness, they don't even have to buy the book itself.

"It's that important," said Jussel, "because we have zero media literacy education requirements in school, yet kids as young as kindergarten are receiving media messages every nanosecond."

The Secret of the Vanishing Bones is the first in her K-5 [Digital Dogs Book Series](#) honored as a top media literacy pick in the resource roundup hosted by National Association of Media Literacy Education founders earlier this spring. Her second book in the series aims to build children's awareness of algorithms, data bias and recommendation rabbit holes, coming soon in spring of 2022.

Other books in her media literacy series address smart speakers, voiceprints, artificial intelligence, misinformation, and the "internet of things" (IoT) using children's literature as a subtle teaching tool to embed inquiry, analysis and the questioning and framing of media messages through the lens of this playful pack of Digital Dogs.

Jussel summed why she's so passionate about giving the gift of media and digital literacy:

"Online screen time has doubled since covid, and almost all of the 'smart' toys on wish lists this year are internet connected, yet parents and educators haven't 'connected' the dots on the magnified need for knowledge gain. We can't just wait around for schools, legislators or tech companies to codify this into curriculum...early inquiry is the gift that keeps on giving...we need to see that skill placed at the top of every smart list."

###

Events, signings and read-alouds will be hosted locally with indie bookstores like ReachAndTeach.com at 144 West 25th Ave, San Mateo.

For library, parenting/educator events, classroom visits or interviews contact: John Pellegrino: 617-872-1875 john@letitbeknownpr.com or the author herself.

The Digital Dogs Book Series of Kidlit At A Glance

- The Secret of the Vanishing Bones: Tracking the Data Trail Available in hardback, paperback and e-book on Amazon, KDP Select, BarnesandNoble.com, Target.com and other online retailers. <https://www.amazon.com/Secret-Vanishing-Bones-Tracking-Literacy/dp/1954361009/>

- FREE 2021 Holiday Coloring Pages are housed under Activities at DigitalDogsBook.com

- The Secret of the Vanishing Bones has been selected for inclusion in “50 Best Media Literacy Books” hosted by Renee Hobbs, co-founder of the National Association for Media Literacy Education and education expert Frank W. Baker, President of Media Literacy Clearinghouse.

- Ages: 5-10 (Grades: K-3; K-5 for more robust inquiry activities in Parent/Educator guide)

- A 20pp FREE resource/companion guide for Parents & Educators to actively engage kids w/over along with FREE media literacy coloring pages for early ages Pre-K/Kindergarten. <https://digitaldogsbook.com/>

- The Secret of the Vanishing Bones: Tracking the Data Trail is published by Shaping Youth, and will be featured in the Society of Children’s Book Writers & Illustrators “new releases” kidlit roundup on Dec. 11, 2021

More Pullquotes from Author Amy Jussel on the Magnified Need for Increased Media & Digital Literacy

“Our stories seed very basic media inquiry cues, which adults need to learn as much as kids do.”

“It’s a bit of a wild west land grab on the data collection front without clear regulations right now, so while kids learn simple awareness about data sharing and media literacy, adults need to think more about motivations and monetization of media tools.”

“Parents should ponder how much personal data they want floating around about their child, amidst corporate promises of encryption, anonymized and de-identified data often then sold to massive data brokers who connect those dots and track those trails with ease.”

“Adults are often naïve and unschooled about digital and media literacy themselves, so I’m writing these stories to get directly into kids’ hands for reading and learning together...there’s a FREE Parent & Educator guide full of activities and prompts to delve deeper into these issues.”

Helpful Reporter Resources:

Norton's IoT Device Security: The Ultimate Guide for Securing Your Tech
<https://us.norton.com/internetsecurity-iot-iot-device-security.html>

Mozilla's Privacy Not Included Gift Guide <https://foundation.mozilla.org/en/privacynotincluded/>
Map of State by State Status By Progress in Legislating Media Literacy Education Curriculum
<http://MediaLiteracyNow.org>

On Internet Connected Toys via Markkula Center for Applied Ethics:

<https://www.scu.edu/ethics/internet-ethics-blog/on-internet-connected-toys-and-human-flourishing/>

*60% source cited: Tinititi Research: Holiday Consumer Spending Trends

Amy Jussel

Shaping Youth

+1 415-519-7000

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/557831458>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2021 IPD Group, Inc. All Right Reserved.