



American Girl's New 2009 Girl of the Year Tackles Bullying

—National Campaign Encourages Girls to Stand Strong and Speak Out Against Bullying —

Middleton, WI-January 1, 2009: Teasing. Taunting. Being mean. No matter what you call it, it's bullying and millions of girls are affected by it every day. Whether bullying is verbal, physical, or emotional, studies show that it's on the rise and can lead to lower grades, eating issues, depression, and plenty of heartache for girls. To bring awareness to the devastating effects of bullying and to give girls the skills to stand strong and speak out against it, American Girl is proud to introduce **Chrissa™, 2009 Girl of the Year®**. A friendly, creative girl who finds the courage to stand up for herself and for others, Chrissa will launch on January 1 with two books, an 18-inch Chrissa doll, accessories, and two 18-inch friend dolls. And for the first time ever, American Girl will launch its new Girl of the Year with a feature film, **An American Girl: Chrissa Stands Strong**, available on DVD from HBO Home Entertainment on January 6, 2009.

Available for only one year, Chrissa is the seventh in a series of Girl of the Year contemporary characters whose interests and concerns reflect those of girls today. Like past Girl of the Year topics, the subject of relational aggression was chosen based on thousands of letters and e-mails from girls looking for guidance when faced with bullying at school, on the playing fields, and in their relationships. American Girl experts teamed up with other authorities and organizations such as The Ophelia Project®, a nonprofit that serves youth and adults affected by relational aggression, to help teach girls how to handle bullying in a positive way.

In addition to the new Chrissa books, products, and full-length film, American Girl is also introducing a nonfiction advice book, **Stand Up for Yourself & Your Friends: Dealing with Bullies and Bossiness and Finding a Better Way**, to give girls the confidence and know-how to deal with bullying when it arises. Written by Patti Criswell, clinical social worker and American Girl consultant, *Stand Up for Yourself & Your Friends* is full of girl-friendly tips and quizzes and provides advice from girls who have dealt first-hand with bullying. Added bonuses include an inspirational pledge that girls can cut out and sign, plus a pull-out mini book with tips for parents.

National "Stop the Bullying" Campaign

To help guide girls-and their parents-through the challenging issues associated with bullying, American Girl is launching the following initiatives in 2009:

- **Stop the Bullying. Pass It On! Poster Contest:** American Girl is encouraging girls to use their creativity to design a poster that demonstrates what they can do to put a stop to bullying. Girls ages 8 and up can participate in the poster contest from January 1 to February 28, 2009. Two grand-prize and 30 first-prize award winners will be selected. Additional details and entry forms are available at americangirl.com.
- **Chrissa, 2009 Girl of the Year Web Site:** Located at americangirl.com/girloftheyear, the Chrissa Web site features educational content for girls, parents, and educators, plus discussion questions to use in tandem with the *Chrissa Stands Strong* DVD. The site also features fun crafts and activities related to Chrissa, as well as an inspirational pledge that girls can sign and pass along to friends while seeing an interactive map of all the girls across the country who are standing together to stop bullying.
- **Stand Together. Stop the Bullying Curriculum:** Developed with support from The Ophelia Project, the in-school curriculum (for grades 3 to 5) is designed to educate students about peer aggression, while promoting a safe, supportive school environment. The curriculum will be distributed to approximately 60,000 classrooms, reaching 1.5 million students. A downloadable version of the curriculum is also available at americangirl.com/girloftheyear.

About Chrissa

Written by award-winning author Mary Casanova, the 2009 Girl of the Year books-*Chrissa* and *Chrissa Stands Strong*-introduce readers to ten-year-old Chrissa Maxwell. On her very first day at a new school, Chrissa attempts to make friends but is greeted at first with icy silence from the girls she sits with in Cluster Four. Then, when teasing and pranks turn into serious bullying, Chrissa must find the courage to stand strong and speak out. A section at the back of each book includes letters from real girls who, like Chrissa, have dealt with or witnessed bullying, and gives readers advice on how to handle challenging people in their lives. Each book also includes discussion questions to spark conversations and encourage girls to stand up for themselves and one another.

A beautiful 18-inch Chrissa doll-featuring highlighted dark-brown hair and blue eyes-brings the new character to life for girls. And, for the first time, the new Girl of the Year character will come with two 18-inch friend dolls, Gwen and Sonali, both of whom play prominent roles in the Chrissa books and feature film. Other accessories that reflect Chrissa's unique interests include a warm-up set and swim-team gear, a sundress for the lakeside party she hosts, and pajamas and a craft studio for relaxing and being creative at home. In addition, Dress Like Your Doll[®] outfits and a closed-network instant-messaging system are also available.

The Chrissa doll, books, and accessories will be available for one year starting on **January 1, 2009**, through American Girl's consumer catalogue, at americangirl.com, and at American Girl retail locations. *An American Girl: Chrissa Stands Strong* DVD will be available on **January 6, 2009**, through American Girl channels and nationwide where DVDs are sold. To request a free American Girl catalogue, call **1-800-845-0005**.

About American Girl

American Girl Brands, LLC, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Mattel, Inc. (NYSE:MAT, www.mattel.com), the world's leading toy company. Since American Girl's inception in 1986, the company has devoted its entire business to celebrating the potential of girls ages 3 to 12. American Girl encourages girls to dream, to grow, to aspire, to create, and to imagine through a wide range of engaging and insightful books, age-appropriate and educational products, and unforgettable experiences. In meeting its mission with a vigilant eye toward quality and service, American Girl has earned the loyal following of millions of girls and the praise and trust of parents and educators. To learn more about American Girl or to request a free catalogue, call **1-800-845-0005** or visit www.americangirl.com.

About HBO

Home Box Office, Inc. is the premium television programming subsidiary of Time Warner Inc., providing two 24-hour pay television services - HBO and Cinemax - to over 40 million U.S. subscribers. The services offer the most popular subscription video on demand products, HBO On Demand and Cinemax On Demand, as well as HBO on Broadband, HD feeds, and multiplex channels. Internationally, HBO's branded television networks, along with the subscription video on demand products HBO On Demand and HBO Mobile, bring HBO services to over 50 countries. HBO programming is sold into more than 150 countries worldwide.

About HBO Home Entertainment

HBO Home Entertainment markets an extensive array of programs ranging from the HBO critically acclaimed and groundbreaking series *The Sopranos*[®], *Sex and the City*[®] and *Entourage*[®] to theatrical features such as *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, the #1 romantic comedy of all time. The company's catalog contains hundreds of titles including the multiple Emmy[®] Award-winning HBO miniseries *Band of Brothers*; *Angels in America* and *Elizabeth I*; the Peabody Award-winning children's program *Classical Baby*; provocative movies from HBO Films including *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*; and comedy specials featuring top stand-up performers like Chris Rock and Dane Cook. Launched in 1984, HBO Home Entertainment created a London-based international division in 2003 to capitalize on the rapidly expanding worldwide DVD market.

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