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**PBS KIDS Announces DONKEY HODIE, New Preschool Series Inspired by Characters from MISTER ROGERS’ NEIGHBORHOOD, Premiering Winter 2021**

Show Featuring Original Puppets Empowers Young Viewers to Dream Big, Overcome Obstacles and Persevere

**Pasadena, CA, January 10, 2020** – [**PBS KIDS**](http://www.pbskids.org/) today announced **DONKEY HODIE**, a new social-emotional series for children ages 3-5 created by Fred Rogers Productions and Spiffy Pictures. **DONKEY HODIE** is slated to premiere nationwide on PBS stations, the PBS KIDS 24/7 channel and PBS KIDS digital platforms in winter 2021.

The imaginative puppet series follows the adventures of Donkey Hodie, the granddaughter of the original Donkey Hodie character (now known as “Grampy Hodie”), a puppet from MISTER ROGERS’ NEIGHBORHOOD, who appeared in 59 episodes of the beloved classic children’s show from 1968-1993. The new multiplatform show is filmed at WTTW, the flagship PBS station in Chicago.

“Life lessons like following your dreams and persevering have always been core to PBS KIDS’ DNA,” said Linda Simensky, Head of PBS KIDS Content. “With a little help from Donkey Hodie and her friends, today’s kids will learn how to come up with creative solutions to the everyday problems they encounter and keep trying until they achieve their goals.”

“**DONKEY HODIE** further extends and builds on our mission to create engaging, educational content that makes it fun for children to learn and grow while engaging their parents,” said Ellen Doherty, Chief Creative Officer, Fred Rogers Productions. “This exciting show will also introduce effective new approaches to support children’s social-emotional development and growth. We can’t wait for kids and parents to meet Donkey and her friends!”

**DONKEY HODIE** is inspired by the quirky, funny side of children’s TV pioneer Fred Rogers and his mission to help young viewers navigate the frustrations and challenges of childhood. It is set in the land of Someplace Else, which was created by Rogers on MISTER ROGERS’ NEIGHBORHOOD.

“We were really inspired by the silly side of Fred Rogers, and it’s a thrill to expand the Someplace Else world he dreamed up,” said Adam Rudman, co-founder of Spiffy Pictures. “We’re excited to share brand new lovable and funny puppet characters with preschoolers and their families,” added David Rudman, co-founder of Spiffy Pictures

In every episode, Donkey Hodie, a sweet, yellow donkey with a magenta mohawk, along with her pals, Purple Panda, Duck Duck and Bob Dog, empower preschoolers to dream big and overcome obstacles in their own lives, to work hard and persevere in the face of failure, to be resourceful and discover they are capable of solving problems on their own—and to laugh themselves silly along the way.

New, original music will be featured in **DONKEY HODIE**—along with reimagined versions of Fred Rogers’ original songs—to reinforce and underscore each story’s positive message. Each episode of **DONKEY HODIE** will include two 11-minute, character-driven stories with accompanying short form content. The series is currently in production for 40 half-hour episodes.

Along with the television series, **DONKEY HODIE** will offer digital content for kids, parents and teachers, launching in tandem with the series. **DONKEY HODIE**games will be available on [pbskids.org](http://www.pbskids.org/) and on the free [PBS KIDS Games App](http://pbskids.org/apps/play-pbs-kids-games.html), along with clips and full episodes streaming across PBS KIDS’ video platforms, including the free [PBS KIDS Video App](http://pbskids.org/apps/pbs-kids-video.html). Parent resources, including tips and hands-on activities to extend the learning at home, will be available on the [PBS KIDS for Parents](http://www.pbs.org/parents/) site, and [PBS LearningMedia](https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/) will offer classroom-ready materials for teachers, including video excerpts, games, teaching tips and printable activities.

**About PBS KIDS**
PBS KIDS, the number one educational media brand for kids, offers children ages 2-8 the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television, digital media and community-based programs. PBS KIDS and local stations across the country support the entire ecosystem in which children learn, including their teachers, parents and community. Provided by stations, the free PBS KIDS 24/7 channel and live stream is available to more than 95% of U.S. TV households. Kidscreen- and Webby Award-winning [pbskids.org](http://www.pbskids.org/) provides engaging interactive content, including digital games and streaming video. PBS KIDS offers mobile apps to help support young children’s learning, including the PBS KIDS Video app, which is available on a variety of mobile devices and on platforms such as Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, Android TV, Samsung TV and Chromecast. PBS KIDS also offers parent and teacher resources to support children’s learning anytime and anywhere. For more information on PBS KIDS content and initiatives supporting school readiness and more, visit [pbs.org/pressroom](http://pbs.org/pressroom), or follow PBS KIDS on [Twitter](http://twitter.com/pbskids), [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/pbskids) and Instagram.

**About Spiffy Pictures**Founded in 2003 by brothers David and Adam Rudman, Spiffy Pictures is a creative development and production company specializing in family entertainment. The Emmy Award-winning creative team has created, produced, written and directed live-action and animated projects for Nickelodeon, Disney, MTV, Comedy Central, Sesame Street and Warner Brothers. Their projects include creating and producing the Emmy nominated animated hit show *Nature Cat* for PBS Kids, the Emmy and Prix Jeunesse-nominated *Jack’s Big Music Show*for Nick Jr, the Emmy-nominated *Bunnytown*for Disney and Nick Jr.’s Parent’s Choice Award-winning *Curious Buddies* brand of home videos. Spiffy Pictures produced *Scooby-Doo! Adventures, The Mystery Map*for Warner Brothers and most recently created *Frankie and Frank*for Nick Worldwide. Visit us at [www.spiffypictures.com](http://www.spiffypictures.com/).

**About Fred Rogers Productions**

Fred Rogers Productions was founded by Fred Rogers in 1971 as the non-profit producer of Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood for PBS. In the years that followed, it not only created hundreds of episodes of this much-loved program, but also extended Fred’s values and approach to other efforts in promoting children’s social, emotional, and behavioral health while supporting parents, caregivers, teachers, and other professionals in their work with children. Fred Rogers Productions continues to build on Fred’s legacy in innovative ways through a wide variety of media and engages new generations of children and families with his timeless wisdom. The company’s highly-rated, Emmy Award-winning children’s series include *Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood*, *Peg + Cat*, *Odd Squad*, and *Through the Woods*. For more information, visit [www.fredrogers.org](http://www.fredrogers.org/) or follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/FredRogersCo), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/The-Fred-Rogers-Company-134212499968848/), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/fredrogersproductions/), and [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-fred-rogers/?viewAsMember=true).

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