

NEWS RELEASE

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Study Shows Public Trusts PBS-Member Stations, Values Impact on Children

WARRENSBURG, MO (March 1, 2016) – From its locally produced programs to engagement with K-12 students and educators across the region, KMOS shares with other PBS-member stations in a #1 rating in public trust among nationally known institutions. The same study scored PBS above the public courts of law, in second place for public trust, touted PBS’s positive impact on the education of the nation’s children, and also confirmed that people consider PBS “an excellent use of tax dollars by the American public.”

The study was conducted for the 13th consecutive year, and took place in in January 2016 by Survey Sampling International (SSI), which polled by telephone 1,000 adults age 18 and over. PBS annually commissions this research to measure its performance and value as judged by the American people – its most important stakeholder.

Key findings include confirmation that the American public ranks PBS KIDS the #1 education brand. They consider it the top provider of content that “helps prepare children for success in school and life.” They also consider PBS the safest media destination, as well as a leading innovator in educational media and more.

Owned and licensed by the University of Central Missouri, and located on campus, KMOS is a PBS television station that has long been part of the educational fabric for mid-Missouri. Its broadcast radius reaches more than 1 million people and about 200,000 households, providing access to an array of PBS and locally produced programs.

“From programming that accounts for more than 50 percent of our airtime, to our active engagement with K-12 systems in our viewing area, to our connection with classroom teachers by providing free support materials, KMOS is all about education. It’s baked right into our DNA as part of our presence on the campus of UCM, where students gain real world hands-on experience by working with KMOS while attending classes, all while we help them minimize the cost of paying for their education,” said Phil Hoffman, director of broadcasting services at UCM.

With stations such as KMOS contributing to positive national survey results, approximately eight out of 10 people who took the survey expressed trust in PBS, with 79 percent noting they “trust a great deal” or “trust somewhat.”

“KMOS, like most PBS stations, receives support from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). CPB is

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funded by federal tax dollars, and the funds KMOS receives from CPB go a long way: from bringing high-quality educational programs to mid-Missouri, to allowing us to bring free books to local literacy programs, to providing for programs to enhance our local community like our ‘Your Thursday’ local lineup,” Hoffman said. “Telling stories of mid-Missouri falls to stations like KMOS because so few others will do it, and that speaks directly to our impact on the local area.”

At least 77 percent – nearly eight in 10 respondents – believe money given to PBS is “well spent,” according to the survey. Only military defense outranked PBS as the best value for the American tax dollar, with nearly three quarters - 72 percent - of those polled calling PBS an “excellent” (21 percent) or “good” (51 percent) use of their tax dollars. Funding for military defense was described as “excellent” or “good” by 73 percent (25 percent “excellent” and 48 percent “good”) of the respondents.

Forty percent of the respondents named PBS KIDS the most educational media brand, significantly outscoring the second most highly rated kids brand, Discovery Family, which was considered most educational by 24 percent. What’s more, 92 percent of respondents agreed “strongly or somewhat” that PBS helps children learn reading, math and social skills; 90 percent agreed “strongly or somewhat” that PBS models positive social and emotional behaviors for children; and 86 percent agreed “strongly or somewhat” that PBS KIDS “is a leading innovator in educational media.”

“There is nothing more important to the mission of PBS and PBS stations than earning the trust of the American public and serving all or our nation’s children with educational media that enables them to build skills that are key to succeeding in school and life,” said PBS CEO Paula Kerger. “I am tremendously proud that people across the nation see us as the leader in providing children with the tools they need to prepare for the future. PBS and our stations are committed to developing new and innovative ways to reach today’s families and support learning.”

Hoffman added that about 35,000 people are watching programs on KMOS any given week, and much of that relates to educational offerings. He insists the personal touch with those who support public television, and a desire to learn how to better serve the interests of KMOS and PBS viewers, is important to gaining the public trust.

“Unlike many media outlets today, there is still a strong local presence at KMOS. Viewers can call me directly, and often do, to tell me exactly what they think. I love that connection, even when a viewer is not happy with a program or decision we’ve made, because I know they truly value KMOS. Otherwise, they would not have even bothered to make a call,” Hoffman said.

Learn more about how PBS and local member stations are trusted, valued and essential to communities they serve at ValuePBS.org, and to find out more about KMOS, visit ucmo.edu/ur/broadcast/pbs.cfm.

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