GUIDELINES FOR CONTENT CREATION AND EVALUATION:

The Children's Partnership

VERSION 1.0

These guidelines were initially developed by The Children's Partnership to establish a consistent, credible, and equitable system for evaluating Web sites for possible inclusion in the "Online Resources" section of the Contentbank Web site. We now offer them to the staff of community-based organizations and online content producers to aid in the selection and creation of low-barrier Internet content. We hope the guidelines will help address the needs of the 50 million Americans who, because of their limited-literacy and English skills, cultural backgrounds, or disabilities, are poorly served by online content today.

The guidelines include three sections:

Section 1 Baseline Requirements;
Section 2 Standards for Low-Barrier Web Sites; and
Section 3 Requirements for High-Quality Web Sites

Site Name:			
URL:			
Reviewer:		**Review Date:**	
Site Subject:		**Site Type:**	Government ☐ Nonprofit ☐ Commercial ☐ Educational ☐ Other ☐
Intended Audience:			

- Mark any criteria that do not apply to the site you are evaluating as 'not applicable' (N/A).
- Give zero points when the site does not meet the given criteria at all.
- If there are two questions per guideline, award the higher point value if both are satisfied and the lower point value if just one is satisfied.

Section 1 Baseline Requirements
➡ **If your score in this section is less than 8 points, do not proceed with the evaluation.**

	+ 4-5 points
Is the author or sponsor clearly identified?	
Is the site related to the following subjects: education, health, housing, jobs, legal services, cultural perspectives, local content, or other topics of particular interest to underserved communities?	

Section 1 Baseline Requirements Total _____

Section 2   Requirements for Low-Barrier Web Sites
➡ **Each category in this section focuses on a specific characteristic that can enhance the accessibility of online content. Assign to each applicable item in this section 4, 5, or 0 points.**

	+ 4-5 points
LITERACY LEVEL OF TEXT	
Are "active" verbs used instead of "passive" verbs (for example, "The car hit the tree," instead of "The tree was hit by the car.")?	
Are the sentences clear and short (on average not more than 15-20 words each)?	
Is the text written in the simplest and most familiar words appropriate?	
Does the site avoid busy or distracting graphics and animation?	
LANGUAGE(S) OF TEXT	
Is the text available in one or more languages in addition to English?	
ACCESSIBILITY TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES	
Does the site include descriptive alt tags, title tags, and URLs?	
Is the site built without frames?	
Is all of the information conveyed with color also available without color?	
Do the foreground and background color combinations provide sufficient contrast for those who are visually impaired or colorblind?	
Is the site Bobby approved, or does it adhere to Section 508 or other accessibility guidelines?	
Does the site make its accessibility policy available to its users?	
CULTURAL FOCUS OF CONTENT	
Is this site about or intended for a specific cultural or ethnic group?	
Does the site reflect cultural and ethnic diversity in conveying mainstream/general content?	
Is this site created and maintained by members of the ethnic/cultural group reflected in its content?	
COST OF ACCESS AND USE	
Is the site's content free or low cost?	
GEOGRAPHIC SPECIFICITY OF CONTENT	
Does the site provide information that is localized as much as possible at the state or preferably city/neighborhood level?	
Is the site sponsored by a locally based organization, government agency, or business?	
Does the site provide practical information for the local community (for example local job, housing, and school listings, or information about neighborhood events)?	
Can members of the site's intended audience contribute content to the site?	

Section 2   Requirements for Low-Barrier Web Sites Total: _____

Section 3 Requirements for High-Quality Web Sites
➡ Assign 3, 4, or 0 points to each applicable item marked "PRIORITY," and 1, 2, or 0 points to each applicable item marked "DESIRABLE."

SOURCE

Priority	+ 3 - 4 points
Is the author or sponsor clearly identified?	
Desirable	+ 1 - 2 points
Are the credentials and backgrounds of the sponsors easy to find?	
Is e-mail, phone, fax, or mail contact information easy to find?	

PRIVACY

Priority	+ 3 - 4 points
If the site collects information about users, is it easy to find the Privacy Policy or "Terms of Use" statement?	
Does the Privacy Policy include a statement about how personal information is handled?	

INFORMATIONAL QUALITY

Priority	+ 3 - 4 points
Is the purpose of the site and the target audience clear?	
Does a scan of the site's text show it to be generally free of grammatical and spelling errors?	
Is there a copyright date? Are there publication and revision dates on the articles and content?	
Is the information current, for example has the site been updated in the past three months?	
Is the site objective in presenting information? If it intends to have a bias, is the bias clearly stated?	
Is there a clear distinction between advertising and informational content?	
Desirable	+ 1 - 2 points
Is the information edited down to the appropriate length for Web use, and is the need for excessive scrolling avoided?	

PRESENTATION

Priority	+ 3 - 4 points
Does the homepage appropriately indicate the site contents including the options, features available, and intended audience?	
Is the navigation clear? Are the menus simple and the sections appropriately named?	
Is an easy-to-find site map provided on the site?	
Is the text a readable size and style?	
Are the graphics simple and attractive without being distracting?	

Section 3   Requirements for High-Quality Web Sites (continued)

PRESENTATION (CONTINUED)

Is there an easy way to get back to the homepage from elsewhere on the site?	
Do the pages have titles?	
Does the site run without requiring Flash, Shockwave, or any other plug-ins? If plug-ins are required, are they easy to download and use?	
Desirable	+ 1-2 points
Does it have an attractive overall look and well-balanced use of color?	
Is there a printer-friendly option?	

INTERACTIVITY

Priority	+ 3-4 points
Is there a way to search the site to locate information, or is it organized in a manner that makes searching unnecessary?	
Does the site provide content without the need to log in or register? If registration is required for any part of the site, are the benefits of registration clearly explained?	
If there are financial transactions taking place on the site, is it clear that the information is secure?	
Desirable	+ 1-2 points
Is there a way for users to comment on the site's content, for example a feedback form, or user ratings system?	
Is there a way for users to contribute to the site's content, for example submitting articles, links, or posting to a message board?	

TECHNICAL

Priority	+ 3-4 points
Is it viewable with both Netscape and Explorer?	
Does the site load quickly and easily (a maximum of 8 seconds)?	
Does the site fit within the width of your screen?	
Does a scan of the site show it to be generally free of non-working links, missing graphics, "Under Construction" messages, and code errors?	

Section 3   Requirements for High-Quality Web Sites **Total:** _____

Section 1   Baseline Requirements **Total:** _____
Section 2   Requirements for Low-Barrier Web Sites **Total:** _____
Section 3   Requirements for High-Quality Web Sites **Total:** _____

Grand Total   (Section 1 + Section 2 + Section 3): _____
Score   (Grand Total ÷ 215 − total N/A points) x 100 = Score): _____ %