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Shark Research Institute

**For Immediate Release**

## ***Help! Sharks! On Fintastic Friday***

On **May 13, 2011**, kids nationwide will join [WhaleTimes, Inc.](http://WhaleTimes, Inc.) and the [Shark Research Institute](http://Shark Research Institute) to celebrate the first annual ***Fintastic Friday: Giving Sharks a Voice***. Kids will raise their voices to help save unsung ocean heroes -- sharks. *Fintastic Friday* is a collaborative effort of the two non-profit organizations to raise awareness of the worldwide plight of sharks and get students involved in an important conservation issue.

**Why a holiday for sharks?** People kill as many as 100,000,000 sharks a year for fins, liver, or meat. Millions are killed just for their fins to make soup. Populations are declining at catastrophic rates -- 90% in some places. Throughout the world, there is little or no regulation to protect these important predators. Public outcry appears to be negligible, perhaps because sharks believed to be villains, not victims.

"It is time to correct and update the image of sharks. They are vital to the survival of all ocean species," said WhaleTimes Director, Ruth Musgrave and author of the new book, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KIDS EVERYTHING SHARKS. "Sharks need a voice and we knew kids could and should be that voice of change for this indispensable predator."

Musgrave was inspired to create Fintastic Friday while writing the shark book. She felt, children needed a platform and opportunity to make a difference. Shark fin soup is not (commonly) eaten in the USA and the usual "reduce, reuse and recycle" (though important) wouldn't make dent in the demise of shark populations.

"Many children already know about ocean conservation and understand the importance of sharks in maintaining a healthy ocean," said Marie Levine, executive director of the Shark Research Institute. "Fintastic Friday teaches children how to get involved. It gives them the tools to ensure their voices are heard so that they can make a difference."

Participation is free, easy, and at whatever level people choose, from doing a craft, learning about sharks, printing and posting a "Shark Conservation Zone" sign, or even having a Sharks in the Park" rally. Students can also gather



Fintastic Friday (continued)

signatures for the Shark Research Institute's "No Finning" efforts. The goal is to simply make some noise and raise awareness.

Preserving sharks is one of today's most important ocean issues. Join the Shark Research Institute and WhaleTimes May 13 for *Fintastic Friday: Giving Sharks a Voice*.

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**The Shark Research Institute is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit scientific and conservation organization** which conducts and sponsors research on sharks and promotes their conservation at regional, national and international levels. Programs also include monitoring shark populations, behavioral and DNA studies and public education.

**WhaleTimes, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation** that brings ocean animals and science to life, inspiring students to explore and learn more. Since 1995, WhaleTimes has been a quality marine science resource for children, sharing scientific data and encouraging students' love of the ocean through programs such as, [Hagfish Day](#), [Creep into the Deep](#), [Fishin' for Facts](#), and [Ask Jake, the SeaDog](#).