

Pointers for Parents

Addressing Childhood Obesity

(NAPSA)—Most parents today are concerned about their children's eating habits and activity level, according to a recent survey conducted by Harris Interactive® on behalf of Kaiser Permanente in which 83 percent of parents of children ages 7 to 12 described themselves as concerned. One way that families may be able to address both these concerns and issues is through a new video game.

Childhood obesity is the fastest-growing disease in the U.S., with more than 9 million children considered overweight or obese. The rate of childhood obesity has tripled in the last 15 years. As obesity rates continue to soar, healthy nutrition and activity choices need to be reinforced in all areas of a child's life, from home to school.

To help address the concerns of parents and the nation's alarming rate of childhood obesity, Kaiser Permanente, a national leader in the fight against childhood obesity, is taking health beyond the doctor's office by utilizing a comprehensive approach to obesity prevention. Through its Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) approach, Kaiser Permanente gives kids and families opportunities to make healthy choices at every touch point of their lives—at school, home, online, in their communities, grocery stores and beyond. For example, Kaiser Permanente recently launched a video game that teaches kids to eat healthier foods, be more active and manage how much time they spend in front of the computer and television.

Developed by the producer of the "SpongeBob SquarePants," "Monsters, Inc." and "Rugrats" video games, "The Incredible Adventures of the Amazing Food Detective" is the first game of its



A new video game encourages children to eat healthier and be more active.

kind available for free on the Web in both English and Spanish.

Guided by the Amazing Food Detective, players help eight multi-ethnic characters make healthy food choices and get more active. The game automatically shuts off after 20 minutes, reminds kids to get active, and won't let kids back into the game for 60 minutes, reinforcing the American Academy of Pediatrics' recommendation of no more than one to two hours of "screen time" per day.

Kaiser Permanente pediatric obesity expert Jennifer Bass, M.D., explains that the "Amazing Food Detective" is more than just a video game: "It includes printable materials such as kid-friendly, healthy recipes; scavenger hunts to teach kids how to interpret food labels; experiments to teach kids how to measure sugar in their soda drinks; muscle-building exercises; physical activity charts and activities for parents and children to encourage healthy eating habits."

For more information or to play the game together as a family, visit the Web site at www.kp.org/amazingfooddetective.

A full methodology of the survey is available.