Do Your Child's New Shoes Measure Up?
Tips from the American Podiatric Medical Association

(NAPSA)—While youngsters may want to "toe" the fashion line when it comes to footwear, a parent is more likely to put his or her foot down on the side of safety and health.

Unfortunately, some of the most trendy shoe styles do not provide proper support for the feet. Certain shoes, such as platforms and sandals, can cause serious problems such as ankle sprains, ingrown toenails, bunions, blisters, calluses and painful tendonitis.

To help parents and children walk away happy from a shoe-shopping expedition, the experts at the American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) offer these tips:

1. Check out the shoe itself. Look for stiff material on either side of the heel, adequate cushioning and a built-in arch. The shoe should bend at the ball of the foot, not in the middle.

2. Always have your child's feet measured every time you purchase new shoes, as children's feet change sizes rapidly.

3. Shoes should not slip off the heels.

4. High-tops or boots generally help prevent ankle sprains.

5. Limit the time children wear platform or heeled shoes. Alternate them with good quality sneakers or flat shoes.

6. Don't buy shoes that need a "break-in" period. Good shoes should feel comfortable right away.

7. For athletic activities, choose a shoe that is designed for

To help parents guide kids toward choosing healthy-fitting shoes, the American Podiatric Medical Association has designated a Seal of Acceptance to manufacturers' products that aid in foot health. And many of them can be found at their Web site apma.org.

the sport your children will be playing.

8. Be aware that children might not complain about foot discomfort. Proper foot care is important to the overall health of children. Go to a podiatrist at the first sign of foot problems.

For a list of shoes that have received the APMA Seal of Acceptance and for more information on children's foot care, visit www.apma.org or call 1-800-FOOT-CARE.