

# Pointers For Parents

## Moms Get Help As Kids Take On Global Warming

(NAPSA)—If you were able to get dinner ready without interruption the other night, you have lots of company. A growing number of youngsters have a new interest: global climate change.

Your 8-year-old may be busy purchasing an energy-efficient thermostat for his Idea Seeker house and your 12-year-old may be teaming up with her friends to stop global climate change.

### A Virtual World Of Learning

Kids who walk and talk in the virtual world on Planet Sarillion at KidsCom.com, a social networking Web site for kids, are doing more than just talking with other kids and playing games—they're learning.

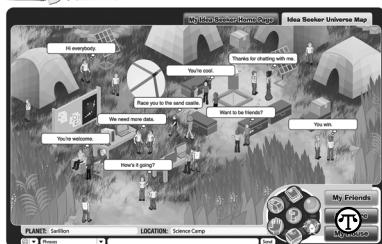
"Kids play in the virtual world, where real-life problems and social issues are simulated. They can then bring the lessons learned into the real world, and have a better chance of successfully confronting problems," said Jorian Clarke, KidsCom.com founder and president. "For example, kids are taking their virtual pets called 'Plant Babies' to fight excessive energy consumption that is a source of increased CO<sub>2</sub> emissions on Planet Sarillion."

A new game launched on the site, "The Adventures of the Idea Seekers: Sarillion's Climate Crisis," takes place on the Planet Sarillion in the Idea Seeker Universe. Global climate change issues are presented as different adventure expeditions that kids must master both on and off the computer.

### Working Closely With Scientists

KidsCom.com, online since 1995, works closely with scientists from the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory at The Earth Institute at Columbia University and other experts to ensure the scientific accuracy of the game. "Kids

KidsCom.com



### Kids play in a virtual world where real-life problems are simulated.

think it is a lot of fun, yet parents know their kids are learning important lessons about global climate change," said Clarke. "As an added benefit, kids will learn about energy efficiency to help their parents save money on costly energy bills."

All kids can register to chat and play at KidsCom.com. Without parental permission, chatting is safely limited to certain preset phrases. Kids with parental permission can chat more freely, but are still monitored closely by adults and a built-in "keep it safe, keep it clean" dictionary that won't allow any words or personal information such as e-mail addresses or phone numbers to be typed in. Paid memberships allow kids to customize their own virtual character, create their own virtual home and have the chance to compete in contests and win prizes.

The next learning challenge will allow kids to have the opportunity to win a trip to New York and a behind-the-scenes visit with the scientists at Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory to see how cool it is to learn about science and study global climate change. They will also meet with architects who design "green" buildings, along with many other fun activities.

To learn more, visit [www.kidscom.com](http://www.kidscom.com).