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throughout the  
United States

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## NEW SURVEY REVEALS OVER 40% OF KIDS ADMIT TO BULLYING

*Students say most common reasons for bullying are  
“to be popular” and “to get your way or push others around.”*

Milwaukee, WI, and Wilmington, DE, March 16, 2004 – Bullying is recognized as an important childhood problem. A new KidsHealth® KidsPoll explores this issue with a national poll of more than 1,200 children from 9 to 13 years old regarding their feelings about bullying and being bullied. The KidsHealth KidsPoll reveals that, although 42% of kids surveyed admitted to bullying at least once in a while, 64% of kids surveyed said bullying was “very uncool.” Even of the 15% who admitted bullying every day, 50% said bullying was “very uncool.” Older children were more likely to say that bullying is “cool.”

When it comes to being the victim of a bully, over half the children said they were not bullied, 33% said they were bullied once in a while, 7% said they were bullied every week, and 8% said they were bullied daily. Of the kids who say they have been bullied, 46% said they respond by “fighting back,” 25% “talk to an adult,” 20% “just walk away and do nothing,” and 9% “try to talk to the bully.” Boys are more likely to “fight back” than girls (53% of boys vs. 38% of girls) while girls are more likely to “talk to an adult” than boys are (32% of girls vs. 19% of boys).

The KidsHealth KidsPoll revealed an interesting dynamic among the 15% who said they were bullied at least weekly. Frequent victims appear to fall into two categories: those who seldom or never bully others (“non-bully/victims”) and those who frequently bully others (“bully/victims”). Compared to non-bully/victims, bully/victims are more likely to fight back when bullied (74% of bully/victims vs. 37% non-bully/victims) and “join in” or “just watch or walk away and do nothing” when others are bullied (81% of bully/victims vs. 28% of non-bully/victims). The non-bully/victims are more likely than any other group to “just watch or walk away and do nothing” when they are bullied, but they are more likely than bully/victims to try to stop bullying of others. This dichotomy of bullying victims may suggest that anti-bullying campaigns may need to be tailored to address the diverse behaviors and motivations of bullying victims.

Eighty-six percent (86%) of kids surveyed said they have seen someone else being bullied. Of those, 41% said they “say or do something to try to stop it,” 23% said they “tell someone who could help,” 20% said they “join in,” and 16% said they “just watch or walk away and do nothing.” Older children are more likely to “join in” or “watch and do nothing,” while younger children are more likely to “say or do something to try to stop it” or “tell someone who could help.”

*What do kids think is the best solution to stop bullying?* Thirty-five percent (35%) said “tell a teacher or parent.” Far behind in responses were “discipline kids who bully” (16%), “have teachers or other adults watch over kids” (11%), and “teach lessons at school” (8%).

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services put forth its solution, “Take a Stand. Lend a Hand. Stop Bullying Now!” – a campaign to educate Americans about how to prevent bullying and youth violence. This campaign launched March 1, 2004.

Over 1,200 children ages 9 to 13 participated in the KidsHealth KidsPoll on bullying at 11 member sites of the National Association of Health Education Centers throughout the United States. The study was conducted by researchers from the Department of Health Education and Recreation, Southern Illinois University—Carbondale.

For complete survey findings and methodology, visit [www.nahec.org/KidsPoll/](http://www.nahec.org/KidsPoll/). For more information on findings or to arrange an interview concerning the KidsHealth KidsPoll, contact Jeffrey Santoro at (302) 651-4106 or [KidsPoll@KidsHealth.org](mailto:KidsPoll@KidsHealth.org).

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#### **About the KidsHealth® KidsPoll**

A project of the National Association of Health Education Centers (NAHEC), the Nemours Center for Children’s Health Media (creators of KidsHealth.org), and the Department of Health Education and Recreation, Southern Illinois University—Carbondale (project researchers), the KidsHealth KidsPoll gives children a national platform to share their views on health-related issues that affect them. Throughout the school year, regular KidsHealth KidsPolls will reveal kids’ opinions on issues such as obesity, bullying, and alcohol use. For more information about the KidsHealth KidsPoll, please visit [www.nahec.org/KidsPoll/](http://www.nahec.org/KidsPoll/).

#### **About the National Association of Health Education Centers (NAHEC)**

NAHEC is the national association and network of nonprofit health education centers (HECs) and of other organizations that support children’s health education and provide products and services to HECs. NAHEC member centers reached over 3 million children, teachers, and parents in 2003.

HECs use life-size exhibits, advanced audio-visual technology, and specialized, interactive instructional techniques not generally found in conventional classrooms. The curriculum is designed to support school-mandated areas of study. With programs like “Blood & Guts,” Hummers outfitted with removable organs, and playgrounds modeled after anatomy parts, you’ll see why former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. C. Everett Koop proclaimed that health education centers “put pizzazz in prevention.” For more information about NAHEC, please visit [www.nahec.org](http://www.nahec.org).

### **About KidsHealth and the Nemours Center for Children’s Health Media**

The Nemours Center for Children’s Health Media is a unique physician-led editorial group that specializes in developing age-appropriate online, print, and video educational media for parents, kids, and teens. It creates KidsHealth.org, the most visited website devoted to children’s health. In addition to medical information, KidsHealth features articles on emotional, behavioral, and developmental issues of interest to all three audiences. KidsHealth was chosen as the sole U.S. nominee in the e-health category of the 2003 World Summit Award™, which is part of the United Nations’ World Summit on the Information Society. Recently, it won the Pirelli Award for *Best Educational Multimedia*. The Nemours Center for Children’s Health Media offers the nation’s only fellowships in children’s health media—providing physicians with the opportunity to learn how to improve family health through effective communications. It is a division of The Nemours Foundation, one of the largest nonprofit organizations devoted to children’s health. For more information about KidsHealth, please visit [www.KidsHealth.org](http://www.KidsHealth.org).

### **About Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Department of Health Education & Recreation**

Researchers from Southern Illinois University—Carbondale’s Department of Health Education and Recreation conduct the KidsHealth KidsPoll. The research team for this project is led by Stephen L. Brown, PhD, and David Birch, PhD, faculty members in the Department of Health Education and Recreation. The department offers bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees in health education and bachelor’s and master’s degrees in recreation. The health education program is recognized nationally as a leader in school health education and graduate-level teaching and research. Graduates of the program are in health education leadership positions across the country. The department includes 11 health education faculty members and six recreation faculty members. For more information about SIUC, please visit [www.siu.edu](http://www.siu.edu).