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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TUCK IN YOUR KIDS – IT'S GOOD FOR EVERYONE

*62% of Kids Surveyed Do Not Get Enough Sleep. KidsPoll Underscores
The Importance Of Establishing A Bedtime Routine.*

Wilmington, DE, April 4, 2006 – With more and more things competing for your child's waking hours, it is not surprising to hear that most kids are sleep deprived. A recent KidsHealth® KidsPoll estimated that 62% of kids ages 9-13 do not get enough sleep and 70% wish that they could get more sleep. Of those children who are sleep deficient, most required an additional hour or more of sleep per night to meet the recommended amount for children their age. Experts recommend that school-age children receive 9.5 to 10.5 hours of sleep each night.

What can parents do to make a difference in their child's sleep habits? The KidsPoll found strong evidence in support of establishing a bedtime routine. Kids who reported having a bedtime routine were:

- More likely to get the recommended amount of sleep
- Less likely to be tired at school
- Less likely to wish for "much more sleep" than they usually get

Part of establishing a bedtime routine is setting a time for your child to go to bed. The KidsPoll found strong support for parents taking the lead in setting their child's bedtime:

- Children who reported that their parent "decides what time to go to bed" were more likely to get an adequate amount of sleep; in fact, they averaged 45 minutes more sleep nightly than children who chose their own bedtime.

"One of the most troubling things in recurrent sleep deprivation is the effect on the immune status," explains Kate Cronan, MD, pediatrician and medical editor for KidsHealth. *"One or two nights of poor sleep is not the issue, it is those children who*

repeatedly receive too little sleep. What many parents do not realize is that without proper sleep, kids' bodies are not able to fight infection as effectively. In addition to their physical health, sleep deprivation can also affect their outlook on life." A tired adult understands why they may have a tough day when they are sleepy – and they soldier on," she continues. "We cannot expect the same from our children. Parents need to help their children get the proper amount of sleep. In the end, it really will make a huge difference for the whole family."

Is it too late to start a bedtime routine if my child is elementary age? Not at all. KidsHealth.org, the most-visited website about children's health, shares simple tips for establishing (or re-establishing) a bedtime routine with your child.

Tips for Establishing a Bedtime Routine:

- **Bedtime:** Set a bedtime for school nights and stick to it.
- **Prioritize:** Make sure homework (or any other preparation your child needs to make for the next day) gets done first to ensure your child can get to bed on time.
- **Wrap it up:** 30 minutes before bedtime, encourage your child to finish any projects or activities, and begin the bedtime routine (wash face and hands, brush teeth, etc.).
- **Unwind:** Include activities in the routine that will help your child slow down and relax (like taking a shower or reading a book).
- **Time together:** Spend a few minutes recapping the day together. Not only is this a great chance to catch up with your child, but your voice and presence will help your child to relax.
- **Goodnight:** Say goodnight and remind your child to stay quiet and in bed.

The KidsHealth KidsPoll on Sleep surveyed 1,187 children ages 9 to 13 across the U.S. at 10 member sites of the National Association of Health Education Centers (NAHEC). The survey was conducted by researchers from the Department of Health Education and Recreation, Southern Illinois University Carbondale. Survey questions were drafted with the expertise of the KidsPoll Scientific Advisory Board and Experts: **Aaron Chidekel, MD**, Pulmonologist, Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children; **Christopher Laudo**, President, Pennsylvania School Counselors Association; **Jodi A. Mindell, PhD**, Associate Director of the Sleep Center at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and Board of Directors, National Sleep Foundation; **Carter Julian Savage, EdD**, Vice President, Youth Development Services, Boys & Girls Clubs of America; and **Michael E. Wells, PhD**, Education Research Analyst, Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools, US Department of Education.

MEDIA RESOURCES (Soundbites, B-roll, images, and tips):

www.KidsHealth.org/media/kidspoll/sleep.html

For Parents: KidsPoll: Kids Speak Up About Sleep
www.KidsHealth.org/breaking_news/poll_sleep.html

For Kids: What Kids Say About: Sleep
www.KidsHealth.org/kid/talk/kidssay/poll_sleep.html

For complete survey findings and methodology, or to view the 2004-2005 KidsPoll archive, visit
www.nahec.org/KidsPoll

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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 Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Department of Health Education and Recreation (project researchers), the KidsHealth KidsPoll gives children a national platform to share their views on health-related issues that affect them. For more information about the KidsHealth KidsPoll, please visit nahec.org/KidsPoll/.

About the National Association of Health Education Centers (NAHEC)

NAHEC is a 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 2005. 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 "Whodunit? - A Forensic Science Camp," 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 nahec.org.

About KidsHealth®

KidsHealth creates engaging online, print, and video media about a wide range of health and family issues. KidsHealth has a physician-directed, professional editorial staff – and is the largest resource of online children's health, behavioral, and developmental information written for three distinct audiences: parents, kids, and teens. In 2005, over 82 million families turned to KidsHealth.org for expert answers – making it the Web's most-accessed site on children's health. Recent accolades include the **2005 Webby Award for Best Family/Parenting Website**, the **2004 Webby Award for Best Health Website**, the **2004 Parents' Choice Gold Award**, the **2004 Teachers' Choice Award for the Family**, and selection as one of the **50 Coolest Websites** by **TIME Magazine**. KidsHealth comes from Nemours, one of the largest nonprofit organizations devoted to children's health. For more information about KidsHealth, please visit 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 Steve Brown and David A. Birch, faculty members in the Department of Health Education and Recreation. The department offers a bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree in health education and a bachelor's and master's degree 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 siu.edu.