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9- to 13-year olds
throughout the
United States

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW SURVEY REVEALS GRADES, LOOKS, AND PROBLEMS AT HOME TOP LIST OF KID WORRIES

*Where do kids go to learn more about what's worrying them?
"Parents" and "the Internet" top choices.*

Milwaukee, WI, and Wilmington, DE, June 15, 2004 – A new KidsHealth® KidsPoll survey reveals that “school grades” tops the list of worries of 9- to 13-year-olds. In addition to existing sources of stress, almost one-third of kids surveyed worry daily or weekly about their “future” or “being a failure or disappointing loved ones.” A previous pilot study narrowed the most-cited reasons for worry from a list of over 20 possible reasons. Here are the top 8 causes of worry or stress and the frequency of worry among kids surveyed.

Reason for Worry or Stress	% of Respondents Who Worry Daily or Weekly
School grades	53%
Look or appearance	43%
Problems at home	39%
Being liked	33%
Being out-of-shape or overweight	32%
Your Future	30%
Being a failure or disappointing loved ones	29%
Your friends and their problems	27%

When kids are stressed or worried about something, what do they usually do?
There was a virtual three-way tie among kids' answers: 25% of kids surveyed said, “talk to my parent(s)” or “talk to my friends,” and 24% of kids surveyed

said, “keep my worries to myself.” Further behind were “none of the above,” cited by 17% of kids and “do something about what’s causing my worries,” cited by only 9% of kids.

Where do kids go to learn more about a topic that is worrying them? The majority, 42% of respondents, said they go to “a parent.” The second most common response was “the Internet,” which was cited by 24% of respondents, followed by “friends” by 17%, “a teacher” by 13%, and “a doctor or nurse” by 4% of kids surveyed, respectively.

Approximately 1,000 children ages 9 to 13 participated in the KidsHealth KidsPoll on worrying at 10 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.

The KidsHealth KidsPoll revealed a bi-modal pattern of responses. With the exception of “school grades,” kids surveyed fall into 2 groups: the majority (about 50% to 60% of kids surveyed), who say they *never worry* or *worry only once-in-a-while* and the minority (about 20% to 30% of kids surveyed), who say they worry *daily* about each topic. The KidsPoll results suggest the majority of kids are coping relatively well with common worries, while a minority may need some special attention.

For complete survey findings and methodology, visit 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.

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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 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 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. Recent accolades include the **2004 Parents’ Choice Gold Award**, **2004 Teachers’ Choice Award for the Family**, and the **2004 Webby Award for Best Health Website**. In 2003, KidsHealth.org was chosen as the sole U.S. representative in e-health at the **United Nations’ World Summit Awards**. 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 group within the Health & Prevention Services division of The Nemours Foundation, 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 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.