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“GET KIDS IN ACTION” UNVEILS FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND BODY MASS INDEX CALCULATOR FOR CHILDREN

New Tool to Assess Children’s Body Weight and Risk for Obesity Developed by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and The Gatorade Company Partnership

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (July 21, 2004) – Responding to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommendation¹ that body mass index (BMI) serve as the primary diagnostic tool for pediatricians to define childhood overweight and obesity, Get Kids in Action is launching an online BMI calculator for children. Designed to help parents determine if their child is maintaining a healthy weight or if s/he is currently overweight, the new tool also provides valuable insight on the measurement. Parents simply input a child’s age, gender, weight and height to receive personalized results with tips that can help them take action.

Despite the AAP’s recommendation, many parents are unfamiliar with BMI. In fact, a recent survey² showed that seven out of 10 parents did not know that BMI is a measure of body fatness.

“Even those parents who are aware of the term BMI don’t realize that it is calculated differently for children than for adults,” said Dr. Steven H. Zeisel, professor and chair of nutrition at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s schools of public health and medicine. “This is the first, easy-to-use BMI calculator for children, and our goal is to help parents understand the measurement and take a more active role in their child’s health.”

The online BMI calculator for children can be found on www.getkidsinaction.org. This resource-rich Web site also features a Nutrition Facts Label Decoder to help parents better understand the information on food labels so they can make more informed food choices, as well as an assessment tool that asks questions about a child’s lifestyle behaviors to help determine if s/he is at risk for becoming overweight.

These tools are some of the first resources developed by Get Kids in Action, a \$4 million partnership between the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s School of Public Health (UNC) and The Gatorade Company, designed to identify real and proven solutions to increase physical activity to reduce and prevent childhood obesity. Throughout this three-year study, launched one year ago, researchers at UNC are working with the full range of individuals who can help make a difference in this issue: physicians, families and community leaders. In fact, researchers will test counseling strategies for using BMI in the clinical setting.

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Get Kids in Action/BMI Calculator for Children

Page 2 of 2

“Get Kids in Action recognizes that obesity is a complex social problem and requires a multi-disciplinary solution,” said Chuck Maniscalco, president, The Gatorade Company. “That’s why we support Get Kids in Action and why it stands apart from other child activity programs.”

The Gatorade-UNC partnership counts toward the Carolina First campaign goal of \$1.8 billion. Carolina First is a comprehensive, multi-year private fund-raising campaign to support Carolina’s vision of becoming the nation’s leading public university.

Gatorade® Thirst Quencher, the nation’s leading sports drink, was created 35 years ago at the University of Florida to help athletes stay hydrated and play their best game. Backed by more than three decades of research, Gatorade is scientifically formulated and athletically proven to replace fluids and provide energy to working muscles. Research on the effects of exercise, environment, nutrition and hydration conducted at the Gatorade Sports Science Institute, makes Gatorade the most researched sports drink in the world. The Gatorade Company understands the needs of active children and adults.

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¹ *Pediatrics*, August 2003

² These results are from a consumer poll conducted by WirthlinWorldwide. Telephone interviews were conducted with a representative sample of 331 adults in the United States, ages 18 and older, who have children 18 years of age and younger. Random-digit-dialing was used in order to access households with both listed and unlisted telephone numbers. The sampling error associated with a sample size of 331 is approximately plus or minus 5.4%.