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CIOF FINDS NEW NINTENDO GAME DAMAGING AND OFFENSIVE

The CHILDREN'S INTERNATIONAL OBESITY FOUNDATION came out in firm support of the U.K.'s National Obesity Forum against Nintendo's potentially misleading use of the BMI (Body Mass Index) formula in its new game, called "Wii Fit."

/24-7PressRelease/ - May 28, 2008 - CIOF is revolutionary in its comprehensive and supportive approach to dealing directly with the emotional, social and economic issues which lie at the root causes of obesity, which affects more than one in three children and causes innumerable complications, often leading to suffering and death.

Robert Hinnen, CIOF's Director of Programs, commented, "Nintendo's BMI formula is dangerously generalized, and is invariably going to cause healthy children to think that they are fat. It is a game that labels children, further stigmatizing them, robbing them of hope and self-esteem, two of the elements that children desperately need to help them to become physically healthy. Anyone who feels that this "game" is simply a harmless incentive to fitness is terribly wrong. There is a potential for misinterpretation of certain components of this game to be emotionally damaging, especially to an age-group where body image is such a delicate issue that it must be dealt with on a highly individualized basis. Our children don't need to be stigmatized - they need positive reinforcement and better role models."

Douglas Castle, CIOF's Senior Advisor to the Board of Trustees stated, "This game, however well-intentioned, creates a propensity toward stereotyping and generalizing, two of the principal human behaviors that have fueled and perpetuated the obesity epidemic. Our greatest fear is that the game, which is already very popular, is going to provide yet another unqualified standard by which children will be judging themselves and judging their peers.

While the Foundation applauds Nintendo's outstanding efforts to incorporate physical exercise into computer gaming, its oversimplified and misleading use of BMI in assessing the fitness of youngsters whose bodies are changing and growing has a high likelihood of causing emotional damage. Ideally, Nintendo should use some other terminology or technique for fitness measurement. But at the very least, there should be a label warning parents about this particularly sensitive issue.

CHILDREN'S INTERNATIONAL OBESITY FOUNDATION can be reached at 866-526-7086, or at its website, www.ciofoundation.org. The Foundation is independent and is financed exclusively through gifts and donations.