

## **FEATURE – PLAYING VIDEOGAMES FOR GOOD HEALTH**

INTRO: The U.S. Department of Agriculture is cooperating with the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas to develop video games that encourage children to eat healthy food and to exercise. The USDA's Bob Ellison has more from Houston. (1:44) (refeed)

THE EVIL KING ETES (EE-TEES) HAS OUTLAWED HEALTHY FOOD AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN THE LAND OF DIAB (DIE-AB). IT'S UP TO D-J AND HIS FRIENDS TO DEFY HIM BY EATING FRUITS AND VEGETABLES AND BY EXERCISING. ESCAPE FROM DIAB (DIE-AB) IS A VIDEO GAME THAT PROMOTES HEALTHY LIVING. IT WAS DESIGNED AT THE BAYLOR COLLEGE OF MEDICINE IN COOPERATION WITH THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE.

Dr. Tom Baranowski Baylor College of Medicine/USDA ARS: Games like this are fun. Changing your behavior is very difficult to process. Often you are engaging in things you would prefer not doing. You've got to have reasons for not doing them. The game captures the children's attention. It focuses their attention on specific behavior change activities.

THE GAME, FUNDED BY THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DIABETES AND DIGESTIVE AND KIDNEY DISEASES, IS CUTTING EDGE AND EDUCATIONAL, WHICH MAKES IT FUN AND PARENT APPROVED.

Margaret Bernot, Study Participant: Cause usually your parents are like, no you're spending too much time watching tv. Turn off the t-v. Don't play your gameboy and it gets annoying. They want you to play this.

AND THE GAME IS DESIGNED TO TEACH CHILDREN TO MAKE HEALTHY CHOICES ON THEIR OWN.

Bernot: If you don't exercise, no matter how healthy you eat it probably doesn't affect you as much as if you exercised more.

Baranowski: Children have a variety of notions about what constitutes a fruit or vegetable. Many children think that French fries count as a vegetable. We wouldn't want them to increase their daily consumption of vegetables by eating a lot more French fries.

RICHARD BUDAY, FROM ARCHIMAGE, INCORPORATED PARTNERED WITH DOCTOR BARANOWSKI TO DEVELOP THE GAME. ESCAPE FROM DIAB (DIE-AB) SHOULD BE AVAILABLE IN SPRING OF TWO THOUSAND NINE. IN HOUSTON, TEXAS FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I'M BOB ELLISON.