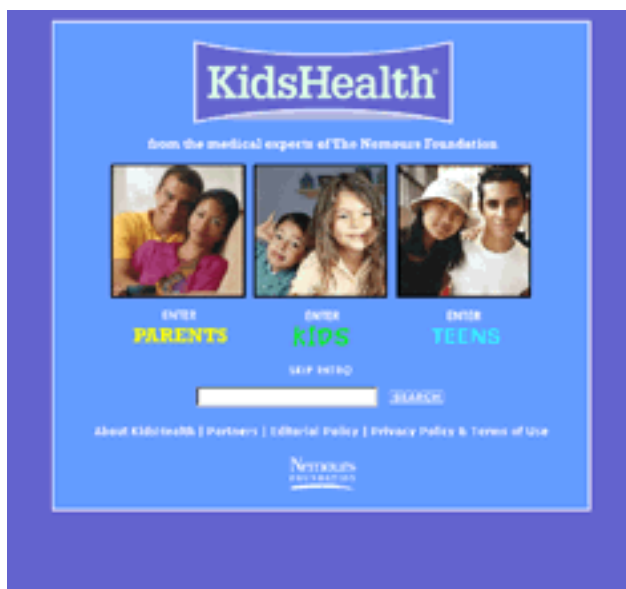


KidsHealth Offers Answers

Neil Izenberg



The World Wide Web is bubbling with information about health. Do sites offer solid information? Are they speaking in a language that youngsters can understand? The medical experts and other professionals who produce KidsHealth provide authoritative, easy-to-understand information on health and personal development for young readers.

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Sofia can't sleep. She is worried that her friend may have an eating disorder and wonders what she can do to help.

Jamie, who is 11 years old, wants to learn about diabetes so he can understand why his grandfather needs to take insulin shots every day.

Thirteen-year-old Lori looks into the mirror and wonders why her friends are more physically developed than she. Is something wrong?

Where can kids and teens turn when they need to learn more about growth, emotions, and how their bodies work? They can talk to their parents, of course—but that's not always easy—and sometimes their parents may not have the answers. Even during a doctor's appointment there usually isn't time to ask and answer questions that kids and teens may have.

Fortunately, there is a place that's easy to understand, always available, and (according to its readers) even cool. It's a Web site called *KidsHealth*, created by doctors and other health experts. The award-winning, friendly site has thousands of easy-to-understand articles, mini-movies, and even games to help answer just about any question that a teen, kid, or parent might have. Whether it's to learn something new or to get help for a school project, every week about one million people visit *KidsHealth*, making it the most popular site of its kind on the Web.

KidsHealth encourages families to discuss topics with each other—that's why most topics have separate articles written for parents, kids, and teens. To make each version of the article really fit the reader, *KidsHealth* editors use words and phrases that are appropriate and engaging—for example, words like “yucky” and “icky.”

KidsHealth gives teens their own homepage that is written just for them—just the way they like it. During nearly a decade online, the site has received about 100,000 e-mails from readers, many from teens who write, “This site is so cool” and “I like it because it's written with a low cheese factor.”

What subjects are most popular with kids and teens? Teens look for just about all topics, but some of the most

popular areas are sections about puberty and physical development, sexuality, diet and nutrition, and emotional concerns. Kids often go to the site to learn how the body works—usually for homework help or a school assignment.

KidsHealth, which features hundreds of articles in Spanish, has as much information as a 40-volume encyclopedia and is updated and expanded daily. Whether the article is about a serious, complex medical condition or a simple recipe for kids with special dietary needs, each article is reviewed multiple times by doctors and other health experts. We get rid of all the doctor-speak so people can really understand it.

KidsHealth has been growing and developing on the Web since 1995. In 2004, the site won the prestigious Webby Award for the Best Health Site on the Web—as well as the 2004 Parents’ Choice Gold Award and the 2004 Teachers’ Choice Award. *KidsHealth* was also chosen as one of the “50 Coolest Websites” by *Time* magazine.

KidsHealth goes to a lot of effort to earn its reputation. Everything we put on the site has to be current and accurate. Unlike books that become quickly outdated, *KidsHealth* is a resource that can be counted on as an up-to-date resource filled with lots of other great things—like interactive movies, sounds, and activities that you just can’t find on paper. ■

KidsHealth.org is a project of the non-profit Nemours Foundation. It has no pop-ups, advertisements, or privacy infringements. The staff of KidsHealth is a unique group of pediatricians, editors, graphic designers, and programmers based at the renowned Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children in Wilmington, Delaware.

Other youth oriented sites are:

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—Adolescents & Teens: <http://www.cdc.gov/health/doc.do/id/0900f3ec80227093>

Health Initiatives for Youth: <http://www.hify.org/index.html>

The Prevention Institute: at <http://www.preventioninstitute.org/children.html>

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