



For Immediate Release

STARLIGHT STARBRIGHT BRINGS ASTHMA GAME, 'QUEST FOR THE CODE®,' ONLINE

****Study shows improvements in children's self efficacy, knowledge, quality of life, improved asthma symptoms, medication adherence, and avoidance of asthma triggers***

*****Game Decreases School Absenteeism Among Children With Asthma***

LOS ANGELES – March 13, 2007 —Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation has made its interactive educational asthma game, *Quest for the Code®*, formerly on CD-ROM, available online www.starlight.org/asthma. Featuring voiceover talent of Cuba Gooding Jr., Whoopi Goldberg, Kelsey Grammer, Gwyneth Paltrow, Glenn Close, Shaquille O'Neal and other celebrities, *Quest* is a fun and engaging way for children, and their parents, to learn to manage a child's asthma, find coping tips and get advice. Anecdotal evidence from school nurses indicates that children's use of this game, a psycho-educational intervention, can reduce school absenteeism.

"Quest for the Code" was developed with the input of an advisory team of national pediatric asthma experts. According to *Quest for the Code's* lead medical advisor, Gary S. Rachelefsky, MD, Professor of Allergy and Immunology, University of California Los Angeles, Director of Center for Asthma, Allergy and Respiratory Diseases at UCLA School of Medicine:

Asthma is the most common chronic disorder in childhood, currently affecting an estimated 9 million children under 18 years. It is the leading cause of school absenteeism, one of the leading reasons for emergency room visits, and a major reason that parents miss work. I worked with Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation on the development of *Quest for the Code* because there is a huge need to educate children and parents about how to manage asthma and reduce asthma attacks, which can be deadly.

"Many people don't realize that asthma can be a life-threatening disease if it's not properly managed," said Paula Van Ness, Chief Executive Officer of Starlight Starbright. "Now that *Quest for the Code* is available to everyone through the Internet, we expect to reach millions more children and parents with this game and continue to lessen the impact that asthma has on our school-aged population."

The Starlight Starbright asthma game, *Quest for the Code®*, weaves education about asthma management into an engaging adventure with rich graphics. In its original CD-ROM version, more than 700,000 copies of *Quest* have been distributed to schools, hospitals, ERs, clinics and doctors' offices reaching more than 2 million children with asthma so far. *Quest for the Code* helps kids and teens ages 7 to 15 find out more about:

–more–

- ★ Early warning signs and symptoms
- ★ Identifying and avoiding asthma triggers
- ★ Myths about asthma
- ★ How asthma affects the lungs
- ★ Proper use of asthma medication devices
- ★ Long-term control medicine and quick-relief medicine
- ★ Measuring and monitoring peak flow
- ★ How to answer questions from peers about asthma

According to school nurse Charla Dunham who hosts an asthma group every other week for children with asthma and uses *Quest for the Code* to teach her children about their illness, “*Quest for the Code* has helped keep two frequently hospitalized children from my school out of the hospital. One student missed a large portion of the school year last year, but since we have introduced him to the game, his medical care has improved, and he has not been hospitalized since.”

Study: Efficacy of *Quest for the Code*

A team of researchers from the University of Miami School of Medicine, led by Alan Delamater, PhD, conducted a study designed to investigate whether use of the asthma game: *Quest for the Code* can help families improve illness management, quality of life, asthma self-efficacy, and asthma knowledge. The study targeted children ages 8 to 12 from ethnic minority background (African-American, Afro-Caribbean, and Hispanic/Latino) with moderate to severe asthma. Results showed significant improvements in child-reported asthma self-efficacy and quality of life at one month, and improvements in self-efficacy, responsibilities, and knowledge at three months; parents reported improved asthma symptoms at one month, and increased child responsibilities, knowledge, medication-taking, and child avoidance of triggers at three months. The 6-month assessment showed sustained improvements in self-efficacy, adherence, knowledge, child responsibilities, and symptoms. Consumer satisfaction ratings from both children and parents were very high.

About Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation

Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation is a nonprofit organization that transforms the lives of seriously ill children and their families through imaginative programs that educate, uplift their spirits, foster a sense of community, and help alleviate the pain and fear of prolonged illness. Starlight Starbright offers an impressive array of in-hospital, outpatient, school and home-based programs and services that touch the lives of more than 180,000 children and families each month. To learn more visit www.starlight.org.

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Media contact:

Donna DeDario

Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation

(323) 556-3322, donna.dedario@starlight.org