

WhyEat in Whyville

Nutrition Crisis

1 in 6 children and adolescents in the United States are overweight or obese, placing them at elevated risk for diabetes and heart disease. Worse yet, this number is on the rise. At the root of this crisis is poor nutrition due to unhealthy eating habits, which can lead to behavioral and cognitive problems that impact learning.

- *Prevalence of obesity in children 6-11 has tripled since the 1970s; 35% of children are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes in their lifetime*

Institute of Medicine of the National Academies

- *40% of children go to school without breakfast*

Dairy Council of California

- *75% of adolescents fail to meet their daily requirement for calcium*

US Department of Agriculture

A Very New Approach

The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (UTHSCSA) is sponsoring an innovative nutrition initiative inside the virtual world of Whyville. Dubbed WhyEat, Whyvillians (what Whyville's users call themselves) learn about health and nutrition eating breakfast, lunch and dinner – virtually, of course – while logged onto Whyville.

Whyville.net is the leading educational virtual world website for boys and girls, ages 8 to 15. For seven years, the site has successfully combined education with entertainment. The citizens learn & play, socialize & recreate, govern & earn, write & design, eat & work, and much more. It's unlike anything on the web.

Whyville has been heralded as a leading website for young adults by national news organizations such as CNN, the Los Angeles Times, Miami Herald, and Education Daily.



Named one of the three best for youths by the Int'l Academy of Digital Arts & Sciences.

Tween Outreach Through Whyville

Whyville.net:

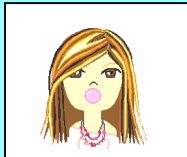
- *Over 1.6 million registered members*
- *Nearly all are tweens, ages 8-15 – prime demographic for addressing nutrition & health*
- *Will be visited more than 20MM times in coming year*
- *Citizens will spend 5MM hours inside virtual world in coming year*
- *Whyvillians will generate nearly 1BB page views in coming year*



Learning About Nutrition



In consultation with nutrition experts at UTHSCSA, the creators of Whyville conceived, developed, and launched WhyEat. With a selection of about 500 foods, Whyvillians can plan their meals. Food can be purchased at the grocery market, the grill, or very soon, the Whyville Cafeteria (sponsored by the School Nutrition Association).



Healthy



Insufficient
Vitamin A



Insufficient
Calcium



Excessive
Caffeine

There are even **virtual health consequences**. The citizens' appearances are altered if they select a poor diet, motivating them to discover the source of their illness and correct it. To plan a healthy diet and ward away illnesses, Whyvillians read and interpret nutritional information and food labels. There is a nutrition center with resources including a virtual dietician who can help by giving diagnoses and advice.

In Whyville, learning is fun, interesting, and engaging. Citizens participate in the educational activities together with friends, and they are challenged to figure out things for themselves.

In educational lingo, the learning in Whyville is *hands-on, inquiry-based, constructivist*, and embedded within a social setting.

Interested? How Your Organization Can Get Involved

Whyville is actively recruiting additional sponsors (for profit and non-profit entities) for the WhyEat program - specifically organizations focused on nutrition, fitness, and healthy lifestyle. There is a wide range of ways in which your organization could participate, including:

- Promote your educational mission to Whyvillians through activities and games accessible inside Whyville
- Provide virtual products to Whyvillians to eat, and advertise the nutritional value of your products
- Open up a virtual store or restaurant inside Whyville

Our design team will work closely with you to design and create high impact sponsorships inside our virtual world.



Your Name Here?

Under the Hood

Running Whyville is a proprietary, patent-pending virtual world **platform** called the Numedeon Interactive Community Engine (N.I.C.E.). This platform integrates a robust suite of virtual world appropriate features and functionality, geared toward an organization's internal and/or external constituency.

Numedeon, the creators of Whyville, also works with organizations to design, develop, deploy and manage custom stand-alone virtual worlds.