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ANNUAL KINDERCARE® LEARNING CENTERS' NATIONAL SURVEY REVEALS THAT PARENTS OF PRESCHOOLERS WANT TO BALANCE RELAXED SUMMER FUN WITH LEARNING

Day Camps Top the Summer Must-Do List with Parents Confirming That They Want Kids' Bodies and Minds to Stay Active

Portland, OR – May 23, 2011 – With an increasing stream of evidence supporting the importance of keeping children's brains engaged in learning activities over summer break, a vast majority of preschool parents (69 percent) are choosing to send their children to day camps, according to the second annual, national "Summer Fun" survey conducted by KinderCare Learning Centers. The nation's largest private provider of early childhood education polled parents nationwide for the second consecutive year about their summer plans and found that more than half (55 percent) believe that summer should incorporate both relaxed fun and continued learning, up from 49 percent last year.

"When teachers test children's abilities after summer break, we often see the steepest decline in skills like reading and math," said Megan Riede, Senior Director, Education Programs for KinderCare Learning Centers. "Fun and engaging summer activities that encourage learning not only help combat summer learning loss, but can positively affect children's motivation, self-esteem, and confidence."

The top two factors parents consider when choosing a summer activity are program content (40 percent), such as varied camp themes, and social interaction (36 percent).

KinderCare Learning Centers has created 12 distinctively themed summer day camps as a solution for parents, pairing discovery and adventure with fun to inspire and engage even the youngest learners. From Gross and Goey Science and Scienterrific to Kid's Kitchen and Wilderness 101, KinderCare educators' balanced approach to learning helps ensure that children not only enjoy hands-on activities, but that they are building the skills needed to prepare them for kindergarten, elementary school and beyond.

A year-over-year survey comparison revealed:

- Day camp popularity increased by seven percentage points, from 62 percent in 2010 to 69 percent in 2011.
- Focused/skill-type, academic (math and/or science focus) and religious-based camps were second, third and fourth, respectively, to the top choice of day camps this year. Academic camps jumped the

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most significantly in 2011 from 19 to 34 percent in appeal, while focused/skill type camps moved from 31 to 45 percent and religious-based camps saw an increase from 26 to 34 percent.

- Beyond camps, parents reported that other summer plans included a family vacation (74 percent in 2011 versus 68 percent in 2010). Economic indicators may have influenced the rise in “stay-cations” to save money, reported at 48 percent in 2011, up from 30 percent last year.

“This summer, no matter what’s planned, we’re encouraging parents to develop a reading strategy that helps maintain and even improve their children’s existing skills,” Riede continued. “Finding time to read together is so easy – in fact, our survey showed that in addition to the popular bedtime story ritual, parents are looking forward to taking advantage of relaxed summer days to read with their kids in lounge chairs and hammocks during the three-month break.”

Parents can find more tips on how to create a fun, educational summer at www.kindercare.com/uploadedFiles/Documents/guide-to-creating-a-fun-educational-summer.pdf.

To enroll in KinderCare Summer Camp online, visit www.kindercare.com/camp or call 888-9FUN-CAMP (888-938-6226). Camp tuition and schedules vary by location.

About the KinderCare® Learning Centers Summer Fun Survey

Commissioned by KinderCare Learning Centers, the survey was designed and analyzed by Ketchum Global Research Network and fielded by Braun Research. The survey reached a national sample of 1,008 parents of children ages 0 to five from April 5-8, 2011. The survey has a margin of error of +/-3.1 percent.

About KinderCare® Learning Centers

Portland, Oregon-based KinderCare® Learning Centers, the nation’s leading early childhood education and care provider, operates more than 1,600 community-based centers across the country of which more than 600 are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC). Accreditation is awarded only to high-quality early childhood programs reviewed by a national commission comprised of recognized experts in child care and early childhood education. For more information, visit www.KinderCare.com.

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