



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **KidsCom.com Launches Online Game Focused on Global Climate Change**

**MILWAUKEE, Wisc., May 10, 2007** – Global climate change is an issue that can't be ignored. While adults are just beginning to understand the vastness of the issue, children are largely unaware. Yet, they are the ones who will not only be most affected, but are also the ones who can enact the biggest changes.

That's why KidsCom.com ([www.kidscom.com](http://www.kidscom.com)), along with scientific advisors from Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, part of The Earth Institute at Columbia University, has created a one-of-a-kind interactive, online learning experience focused around global climate change and the various issues associated with it.

The game – called “Adventures of the Idea Seekers: Sarillion's Climate Crisis” – will be created by and hosted on KidsCom.com, one of the first online communities dedicated specifically to kids and online since 1995.

“This is the first game to use a virtual world to get kids off the computer and into the real world. It is an extraordinary opportunity to teach children in a fun and engaging way about an issue they need to know about,” says Jori Clarke, founder and CEO of KidsCom.com. “We've worked closely with the experts at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory to ensure the scientific accuracy of this game. Kids think it is a lot of fun yet parents know their kids are learning about important global climate change issues that can help change behavior on the planet Earth.”

The global climate change game is set on the Planet Sarillion in the virtual universe of the Idea Seekers. Issues surrounding global climate change will be presented as different learning episodes each with a variety of Idea Seeker expeditions that kids must master both on the computer and off the computer. Each week, new learning expeditions and action steps for real world behavior changes will be added. “Adventures of the Idea Seekers: Sarillion's Climate Crisis” will feature three episodes, with each episode containing approximately 20 individual expeditions. A team challenge will also surround each episode, giving kids the opportunity to win both virtual and “real-world” prizes.

The first episode is called the Carbon Cycle Challenge and will go online on May 10. Team challenge play will begin on August 2nd.

In order to complete an episode, kids will be required to break it down into smaller steps. Each of the game's episodes will focus on specific issues to give kids deeper knowledge so they're able to understand the interaction of the three forces that contribute to global climate change: human activity such as CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, external Earth forces such as sunlight intensity and internal Earth processes such as volcanoes.



With this new game, KidsCom.com further connects the virtual world to the real world for kids, who – as winners of the first tournament – have the opportunity to win a trip to New York City and a behind-the-scenes visit with the scientists at Lamont-Doherty. Currently, there are plans for three tournaments, taking place over the next 18 months.

The prizes for the last two “Adventures of the Idea Seekers: Sarillion’s Climate Crisis” tournaments will be trips to research locations outside of the United States.

“It’s so important that our children understand the global issues that are facing them, and that we provide them the knowledge to identify the problems and work toward finding solutions,” adds Dr. G. Michael Purdy, director of Lamont-Doherty. “This is an important project and we’re excited about providing the scientific guidance that is needed to make sure that what the kids learn is up-to-date and accurate.”

All kids, with parental permission, can register to play “Adventures of the Idea Seekers: Sarillion’s Climate Crisis” at KidsCom.com; however, only those with memberships will be able to compete in the team challenge.

#### **About KidsCom.com**

As one of the first social networking sites designed specifically for kids, KidsCom.com is a fun place where kids meet online to Play Smart, Stay Safe, Have Fun™. It’s a place where kids can entertain and express themselves as they learn skills and character traits such as patience, persistence and gratitude. On KidsCom.com, kids can customize their own avatar characters, chat with old friends and meet new ones as they explore the Idea Seeker Universe, decorate their own houses, play games, nurture virtual pets and create their own home pages in a virtual world free of graphic violence, mindless entertainment and negative stereotypes. KidsCom.com is published by Circle 1 Network, LLC.

#### **About Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory**

The Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory is a member of The Earth Institute at Columbia University, is one of the world's leading research centers examining the planet from its core to its atmosphere, across every continent and every ocean. From global climate change to earthquakes, volcanoes, environmental hazards and beyond, Observatory scientists provide the basic knowledge of Earth systems needed to inform the future health and habitability of our planet.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Jori Clarke and Dr. G. Michael Purdy are available for interviews and a demo of the game can be arranged. Additionally, we’re able to provide hi-res images of the game and Jori Clarke upon request.

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