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Could Wii Fit create bad body image?

Concerns after game labels young girl "fat"

by Adam Vaughan published on 7 May 2008

Parents on an online forum have expressed concerns over Nintendo's Wii Fit creating a bad body image, particularly with young girls. The controversy was sparked after a user complained that the game labelled her relative overweight. "My [relative] came round this weekend and we let her play on our Wii Fit", she wrote. "We have all laughed and joked about being told that we're fat and need to lose weight but I was gobsmacked when it told her that she is overweight." According to the poster, the girl in question is a healthy 4-foot 9-inch 10-year-old who swims, dances and weighs only six stone. "She is solidly built", the poster adds, "but not fat". Apparently the young girl was "devastated" to be labelled as overweight. The poster added: "I know it is just a game but seriously we already have to worry about young girls starving themselves to look like the magazine models and now we have a game that tells them they're fat". Forum users have replied with varying responses, many angrily and backing the poster's decision to write and complain to Nintendo (they are yet to reply). However as one forum member pointed out, Wii Fit merely utilises the internationally-used BMI scale to calculate whether a user is overweight or not, and so Nintendo cannot be held responsible for the outcome. BMI is considered by some to not be the best way to measure weight as it does not take into account frame or muscle. A 17-year-old forum member supported the game, commenting: "I personally don't care what a video game says about you, Brain Training constantly tells me I'm stupid, even though I'm not. I guess some people think differently".