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Kids urged to ditch their devices at Easter

Queensland kids are being urged to ditch their digital devices and get outdoors before tucking into chocolate treats this Easter.

AMA Queensland President Dr Chris Zappala said Aussie kids spent around two to three hours a day watching TV, online or playing computer games, and even longer on weekends and holidays.

“So much sitting around has led to the terrible statistic that 25 per cent of Queensland kids are overweight or obese, compared with about 2 per cent just a few decades agoⁱ,” Dr Zappala said.

“Children who are physically active have stronger bones and muscles, and are less likely to be overweight.

“Being outdoors can also improve their behaviour, concentration and mood and they get better sleep.”

Dr Zappala noted that being active had another benefit.

“Keep moving, having fun and burning energy and you can afford to tuck into Easter treats such as hot cross buns and chocolate eggs,” he said.

Dr Zappala called on communities to throw their weight behind a push for children and teenagers to give digital devices some time out during the Easter holiday.

“Tackling obesity needs everyone to take responsibility for raising a healthy generation,” he said.

“If we’re going to encourage kids to look beyond the virtual world, we need to provide them with real world alternatives that are just as exciting.”

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ⁱ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2013. Australian Health Survey: Physical Activity 2011-12.

ⁱⁱ https://www.health.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0017/537101/cho-report-complete.pdf