Get active with your kids this festive season

Sydney Local Health District is encouraging parents to buy gifts that will help their children get up and be physically active this Christmas.

The Acting Director of Sydney Local Health District’s Health Promotion Service, Mandy Williams, said childhood obesity continued to be a growing concern across Australia.

“Many children sit in front of a computer or a TV, which is fine, but these activities need to be balanced with physical activity,” Ms Williams said.

“Gifts like bikes, cricket sets, a soccer ball or even active computer games naturally encourage physical activity in a fun and exciting way.

“Children and young people who are overweight or obese have a greater chance of becoming obese as adults and in turn are at greater risk of weight-related health issues.

“Unfortunately children with weight problems also experience poor self-esteem and depression,” she said.

Ms Williams also said the holiday period was a good opportunity for parents to get involved and encourage children to be active.

“Go for a walk together or a bike ride, take the kids to the swimming pool or beach or enjoy a game of backyard cricket,” she said.

“Getting active with your kids this holiday season is a great way for the whole family to get together, enjoy each other’s company and have some fun.”

Regardless of the time of year, children are encouraged to follow the simple steps below for a healthy lifestyle:

- Get active each day;
- Choose water as a drink;
- Eat more fruit and vegetables;
- Turn off the TV or computer and play outside;
- Eat fewer snacks and select healthier alternatives.

Find out more at www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au

For more information, please contact Caline Haddad from the Sydney Local Health District at caline.haddad@sswahs.nsw.gov.au or on (02) 9515 9606.