

What is your child watching at kindy?

A NSW mother rang ACCM for advice recently, concerned that her preschool son's group had been shown the movie *Coraline* while at their private child care centre. She had found out when her son started being scared of going to bed at night and asking about whether he was going to get "button eyes"

Coraline is rated PG by the Classification Board with the accompanying consumer advice line "Menacing themes and scary scenes". The PG classification is given to films and video games which the Board sees as "not recommended for viewing..... by persons under 15 without guidance from parents or guardians" and which contain

No. 299 July 2013

"content that children may find confusing or upsetting" (<http://classification.gov.au>)

The ACCM reviewer did not recommend the film for children under 8. (www.childrenandmedia.org.au/movie-reviews/movies/coraline)

It is interesting to note that the guidelines issued by the NSW Department of Education and Communities for their staff state in part that :

- All audiovisual materials and computer games must be previewed by teachers prior to use with students.....Consumer advice found adjacent to classification marking may assist schools when previewing materials.

- Material classified PG should only be used with students after careful consideration by teaching staffgiven that material in this classification might upset, frighten or confuse some students and an adult may be required to provide guidance to students. Staff may wish to inform parents in advance of the presentation of this material to allow parents the opportunity to withdraw their child from the viewing. (https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/curriculum/schools/content/implementation_2_PD20020045.shtml?level=Schools&query=audiovisual+materials)

Concerned parents might wish to check whether their child's school, kindergarten or child care centre is using a similar policy.

Fourth Australian Conference on Children and the Media

Media, minds and neuroscience: The developing brain in a media-rich environment

Keynote speaker:

Baroness Susan Greenfield: *New media and young brains*

Other speakers:

- Dr Kate Highfield: *Upwardly mobile – young children's use of mobile technologies as a tool for learning.*
- Assoc Professor Mike Nagel: *What makes them tick? Understanding the developing adolescent brain*
- Dr Philip Tam: *Problematic Internet use in young people: Evolution of a 21st Century disorder*
- Professor Graeme Vimpani AM: *What does it all mean for parents and those from whom they seek advice?*
- Dr Wayne Warburton: *Screen in the machine: What brain imaging studies tell us about the impact of violent media*

Where: Parliament of NSW Theatre

When: Friday 4 October 2013

Time: 9.00am - 4.00pm (Registration from 8.30am)

Cost: \$165

Bookings through Trybooking at <http://www.trybooking.com/DFRM>

This event is sponsored by the Hon. Greg Donnelly MLC from the Parliament of New South Wales and is a joint venture between the *Children and Families Research Centre* at Macquarie University and the *Australian Council for Children and the Media*.

<http://www.childrenandmedia.org.au/events/accm-conference>

WHAT IS YOUR CHILD
WATCHING AT KINDY?

FOOD MARKETING TO YOUTH

GUEST EDITORIAL:
CREATING BRAND RECOGNITION
THROUGH A FREE APP

4th AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN &
MEDIA CONFERENCE

SAVE THE TOOTH FAIRY



no. 299 July 2013

small screen

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small screen is published at the beginning of each month and reports on the events of the previous month 11 issues per year (Dec/Jan double issue)

Published by
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Children and the Media
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ACCM is a national, non-profit community organisation. Its mission is to promote a quality media environment for Australian children.

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Contributions are welcome.

ACCM's movie review services are supported by a grant from the South Australian Government

ACCM's Website is designed and supported by



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GUEST EDITORIAL

Creating brand recognition through a free App

Dr Kate Highfield

Cenovis have recently made a foray into the App market. Their free App, "Yummo" has been designed for young children and is available for multiple platforms through the AppStore and GooglePlay. Within the App, the children can engage with stories of Sammy and Sally, the "Cenovis twins" and play simple games. Characters such as "Ollie Orange" and "Aubrey Strawberry" suggest the benefits of vitamin C and multivitamins through the short animated stories.

While the game play and storyline within the App is relatively innocuous the concern here is the thinly veiled advertising, with the children's name (the "Cenovis twins") and branding on the home page a clear link to brand recognition.

While the App could loosely be seen to promote healthy eating, for example by suggesting multiple sources of vitamin C, the underlying advertising is concerning and an example of subtle but pervasive marketing. In one of the games the player protects the twins from a cold by "squashing germs" and providing a shield of vitamin C. As with most games children are encouraged to revisit the App to improve their score and so hear more of the Cenovis pro-vitamin message.

Food marketing to youth

With childhood obesity as a pressing public health problem in the US, a recent issue of the quarterly review, *Communication Research Trends* focusses on the issue of food marketing to youth with a lead article by US academics Marlene Schwarz, Dale Kunkel and Sarah DeLucia.

The authors review the research into the impact of food marketing on children and conclude that:

In sum, food marketing directed at children is ubiquitous and effective, and hence is a significant contributor to childhood obesity both in the US and other countries. Parents and community leaders must become educated about the harmful effects of food marketing on children and the pervasiveness of such marketing in the current environment.

They further suggest that:

Parents are already tasked with teaching their children healthy eating habits and can take some steps to improve health in the home environment. But it will be difficult to succeed in stemming the epidemic of childhood obesity if the food industry is allowed to continue to aggressively promote unhealthy products to youth, which undermines the efforts of parents and is a corrosive factor jeopardising public health

Schwartz, M; Kunkel, D; DeLucia, S (2013) Food marketing to youth; Pervasive, Powerful and Pernicious. *Communication Research Trends*, Volume 32, 2, Pp 4-13

The App in itself is relatively harmless but this is another good reminder to parents that they need to participate in children's engagement with technology, co-playing Apps and ensuring that content is appropriate to their children. This App is a good reminder that advertising is more than banner advertisements in games, but can also be embedded in products and activities for children.



Dr Kate Highfield

Dr Kate Highfield is an academic at Macquarie University in the Institute of Early Childhood. Having taught for many years, Kate now works with student teachers, children and parents. The focus of her current research and teaching is on the use of technologies for learning and play, with a specific focus on how interactive media can be used as a tool to enhance learning. Broadly, Kate researches the impact of technology as a tool in learning and play, with young children, undergraduate students, parents and educators. Under this broad umbrella Kate has worked with teachers in rural and remote settings, parents and children. Kate's current research explores young children's learning and play with technology, with a focus on touch technologies, including mobile devices, Tablets, iPads and smartphones. This work examines digital play, in both home and educational settings, and focuses on the impact of interactive multi-media on learning and play.

Violent games - what has changed?

On 31 July 2013 the game Grand Theft Auto V was given an R18+ classification by the Classification Board for "high" impact drug use. The violence level, however, was considered only "strong". People who are familiar with the Grand Theft Auto series might be suprised that if it were not for the drug use, the game would apparently have been given an MA15+ rating, (meaning that the violence was "strong" and was not "realistic and frequent or unduly repetitive").

This suggests that the new guidelines and introduction of the R18+ category may not be having the desired effect of keeping very violent games away from minors.

However, the Classification Review Board met on 29 July 2013 to review the classification of the game, Saints Row IV. The Board came to the unanimous decision of RC (Refused Classification). This agreed with the original decision made by the Classification Board in June of this year. This means that the film cannot be sold, hired, demonstrated or advertised in Australia.

The reasons for the decision will be posted on the Classification website when they are finalised.

<http://www.classification.gov.au/>

Evil menace of sexting

Shocking rise of nude photos, victimisation, blackmail Sunday Mail 21/7/13



**SAM
KELTON**
POLICE REPORTER

A 14-YEAR-OLD South Australian boy could face a lengthy jail term after he set up a fake Facebook account posing as a girl and invited male friends to send him nude photos.

The boy sent hundreds of friend requests posing as a girl, and after gaining their friendship, invited many male friends to send in explicit images.

The shocking case illustrates the challenges faced by the justice system and SA Police, who are now investigating three or four "sexting" cases every week.

Lawmakers do not want to ruin the lives of teenagers who consensually share nude images with boyfriends and girlfriends by tagging them as child pornography offenders – but other cases involve deception, schoolyard trading of illicit images and even blackmail.

Police are now investigating whether the boy behind the fake Facebook profile could be charged with possession of child exploitation material. If any of the pictures involve a child aged under 12, he could face a maximum penalty of seven years in jail.

Other recent SA cases involve a boy selling images of his ex-girlfriend around the school following a fight, and a 17-year-old boy blackmailing a 12-year-old girl into sending him illicit images.

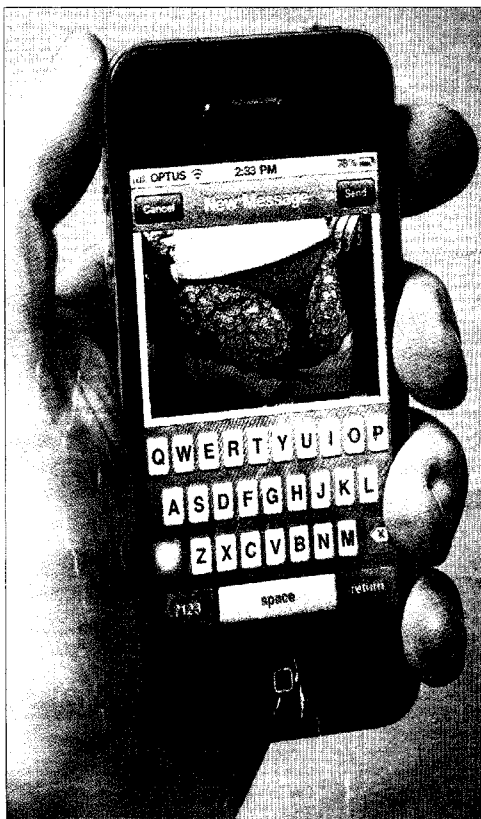
The state's top lawmaker will raise the spiralling problem at an upcoming meeting of state and territory attorneys-general. In SA, Attorney-General John Rau has confirmed his department will investigate how to deal with teenage sexting, which is becoming increasingly prevalent in our schools.

"The Law Society has previously raised this issue with me," Mr Rau said.

"Some of the complexities involve telecommunications where there are issues about where any one state's jurisdiction begins and ends, therefore Commonwealth involvement may well be required."

"In SA, we have already moved to discourage anybody from uploading a humiliating or degrading image, but we do not have jurisdiction to deal with an image once it exists in cyberspace."

"This issue raises many complex questions, such as how do you deal with child pornography (however defined) when the producer of the image is themselves a child? Even more difficult,



Rampant: Sexting is now almost an expected part of relationships for teens

they themselves are the object of the image and that image has been transmitted voluntarily?"

Detective Senior Sergeant Barry Blundell, SA Police's officer in charge of Electronic Crime, says there are serious legal ramifications faced by children as young as 14. "Along with losing the phone, which is destroyed by police, there are legal ramifications as well," Sen-Sgt Blundell said this week.

Education programs are currently in place through police visits to schools.

"That's the sort of thing that my staff will see three or four times a week," said Senior Sergeant Adrian Jones, manager of Sturt Crime Prevention. "It's a classic

boyfriend/girlfriend 'show me a picture of yours, I'll show you a picture of mine' – and straight away legally they've produced and disseminated child porn."

Deakin University's Ross Monaghan says a significant number of teens are involved: "From my discussions with counsellors, it's almost an expected part of relationships for ... people under 20."

**TELL US:
ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT
YOUR KID SEXTING?**

Advertiser.com.au

Serious penalties for sharing pictures

ALL devices in cases such as these are seized by police as they contain child exploitation material and are liable to be forfeited, after which they are destroyed.

CASE ONE: A teenage girl and boy were in a relationship.

During the course of that relationship they shared explicit images with each other via mobile telephone. The couple had a fight and the boy, who had kept the images on his phone, sold the pictures to other students.

The images were circulated among the student body at the school the girl attended.

She changed schools, but the images were also shared among students there.

In this situation anyone caught with the images could be charged with possession of child exploitation material. If the person depicted was under 12 years the maximum penalty is imprisonment for seven years. If not then it's potentially five years for anyone who has the images.

Anyone sharing the images could also be charged with distribution of child exploitation material. The boy could also be charged with the distribution of an invasive image, which carried a maximum of two years imprisonment.

There is also the possibility he could be charged with distribution of indecent filming in which case, as the person is a minor, there is a maximum sentence of four years.

CASE TWO: A 12-year-old girl accepted a Facebook request from a 17-year-old boy.

They communicated through both private messaging on Facebook and Skype text messages.

The girl was allegedly encouraged to reveal her bra to him and he captured the image. It is alleged he then threatened to show the picture to a third person unless she sent more images. The matter came to the attention of police through parental intervention. The boy may be charged with possessing child pornography and inciting a child to commit an indecent act.

FYI Tips for teens and parents

- If you regret sending an image to someone, ask them to delete it and not to forward it on to others.
- If an image has been exposed to others, speak to a trusted adult to assist you in taking action.
- If a sexting photo is sent to your phone, it should be deleted immediately.
- Never forward a sext. It makes the problem worse and impacts negatively on the reputations of yourself and your peers.

- Ask the sender not to send any more images – you can get into trouble even if you did not want to receive the image.
- You may have to block the sender's number or seek advice from the police if the harassment continues.
- Parents should talk to their children and visit websites that help them understand the impact of sexting – acma.com.au and cybersmart.com.au.

The Advertiser 27/7/13

Keeping kids safe online

CHILDREN will be taught about the dangers of "sexting" and staying safe online from next year in an Education Department overhaul.

Education Minister Jennifer Rankine has enlisted a panel of experts, including UniSA child protection emeritus professor Freda Briggs, who will revamp the child safety and protection curriculum to better teach children about sexting, cyber bullying and online predators.

**EDUCATION
REPORTER**
**JORDANNA
SCHRIEVER**



Sexting – the sending and receiving of sexual text messages or images – has become a serious problem since smartphones became popular. "With all of the wonders of technology come enormous

risks and dangers for children and they need to be aware that not everybody that sends you a nice, friendly message has good intentions," Ms Rankine said.

"They need to be alert to the fact that there are predators out there who would be only too willing to take advantage of them."

But she said the revamped curriculum would carefully teach children from the time they begin school – in suitable,

age-appropriate language – about their responsibilities.

"There's a whole new wave of predators trying to engage with children, but also a whole new way for children to be bullied," Ms Rankine said. "They also need to know that the use of technology can also cause great harm to other people."

Ms Rankine said the update had come about because of the generational change in the way children used technology.

"There is a real commitment ... to making sure children are aware of the dangers that might be posed that needs to be age-specific," she said. "It needs to have the right language so that they understand all of the issues around keeping themselves safe."

The review follows similar changes in Victoria and Queensland, where students are to be taught about sexting and pornography.

SA Police last week re-

vealed they are now investigating three or four sexting cases every week, while current research indicates 95 per cent of all young people, aged 10-23, have at least one social media account, and two thirds of parents are concerned about their child posting personal information.

The panel is expected to make recommendations that will form the basis of the new child-safety curriculum from next year.

The Age 11/7/13

Dark undercurrents of teenage girls' selfies



Pouty self portraits have turned boy-girl relations into a cut-throat sexual rat race.

OLYMPIA NELSON

If social media only caused narcissism, it wouldn't be the worst thing. Instagram and Facebook are social networks that not only breed narcissistic tendencies but transform relations into a sexual rat race.

On these ubiquitous portals, the popularity of girls is hotly contested over one big deal: how sexy can I appear and bring it off with everyone's admiration?

That's the reason we see mirror shots, pouting self-portraits of teenagers (typically female) and sexually suggestively posed girls in a mini-dress "before a party last night". They're showing how much they like themselves and hoping that you'll hit "like" to reinforce the claim.

This isn't just an interest in vanity but vainglory, being high up on a scale of "likes". There isn't anything inherently wrong with uploading self-portraits.

Everyone likes receiving compliments and it makes us feel awesome that our own appearance can provide us with an ego boost. But what kind of photos produce an epidemic of "likes"? Nothing with

too much creativity but hip, titty and kiss. It's the true scourge of the selfie.

Why are we girls competing to be the Queen of Pouts? Why do we scour through photos of celebrities and all our ambitious friends to find out who is the new princess of prurient poses? Even demure girls are tempted to strike sexually suggestive poses. But they must be careful, not because parents are looking but because they might not score any "likes" and might then feel a failure, unworthy among their peers.

How confident can you appear at being lascivious? How credible is your air of lewdness? A girl who is just a try-hard will lose credibility and become an outcast. So a lot depends on how much support you can get from other girls.

Girls zealously scroll down their Instagram or Facebook feeds. In Instagram, they might cleverly hashtag the most popular tags, such as #me, #selfie, #instacutie to get an influx of "likes" while they are on the latest-recently tagged photos, then delete all the tags as though nothing's happened.

They're manipulating their image



Actor Miley Cyrus pouts for a selfie.

into popularity. Girls spray their "likes". They comment: "Wow, you're a model"; "Oh my god you babe"; "F-k you're hot"; "You're perfect"; "Best body". Occasionally it's genuine and supportive but it can also be very calculating. Girls fake flattery to get higher on the food chain. In my mind a comment such as, "Oh my god, you're so beautiful!" really means: she has to "like" and comment on my photo! Then behind her back: "What the f--! She is such a slut... I heard she hooked up with heaps of guys and got really drunk at a party and in every photo she poses with her tits out and a push-up bra."

It's tense because it's duplicitous. We're faking it, so that we get to be among the most popular, get to be "liked" by the most popular and thereby gain popularity.

Seeing some of these images can feel too intimate. It's almost as though we're peering through a window. Some photos may be of girls showing skin, or girls lying on a bed. Just about all are seeking some sort of approval from their friends. The aim is not to communicate joy but to score a position.

It's a neurotic impulse, not a happy one. I'm anxious that girls are higher up on the ladder than I am: boys are looking at her, not me. I have to look like her to be worthy of boys' attention. Boys' tastes are not always sophisticated. The aesthetic yardstick is what they see in pornography. So girls have to conform to what boys see in pornography. And

then girls post photos to "out-hot" the other girls by porn star criteria.

Who do we blame for this moral mess? As feminists, we correctly blame patriarchy because boys are securely at the top of the status game. Boys end up with the authority. They have their cake and eat it.

From the moral high ground, they can damn a girl for visual promiscuity, yet enjoy the spectacle at the same time, both with the same misogynistic motives: I like your form but I'm able to scorn you. You're what I want but you're less than me. Girls try to conform to this "ideal" stereotype in their photos and these boys sarcastically comment, "Nice personality" - really implying that the cleavage is their only attribute. Yet they also click the "like" button. The boy who mocks a girl showing her cleavage is in fact the same boy who craves sexual opportunities with her.

A common adult reaction to social media is to restrict things, as if that could ever be possible. You can't force kids to be nice. The real problem isn't something tangible like sexting or bullying, which adults focus on in patronising and unimaginative ways. The real problem relates to conformity. Kids are compelled to act the stereotype, because those who opt out commit themselves to social leprosy. Social media doesn't need adult control. What we need is some good taste.

Olympia Nelson is a year 11 schoolgirl.

Curiosity Show back for a new generation

The Advertiser 3/7/13

JESSICA LEO
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

TWENTY-THREE years after it vanished from our screens, childhood favourite *Curiosity Show* is making a comeback and is stepping into the digital age to capture a global audience.

The hosts of the science-based children's show have acquired the full rights to the series' 5000 segments and will soon be broadcasting on their own YouTube channel.

Dr Rob Morrison and Dr Deane Hutton have long wanted to revive the much-loved show - which ran from 1972 until 1990 - after a concerted social media campaign by fans. But the rights to footage were tied up in a



SCIENTIFIC DUO: Deane Hutton with Rob Morrison.

liquidation freeze. While the science-loving duo owned half the rights, the remainder was being held after Banksia Productions - which also at the time had the rights to Humphrey B. Bear - went

into liquidation. But they have paid an undisclosed sum and now own the 500-plus episodes of *Curiosity Show*.

From July 12 the series - remembered for segments on natural history, astronomy, technology, music and puzzles - will again begin broadcasting via its own YouTube channel, curiosityshow.com.au, and will have its own Twitter and Facebook accounts due to a partnership with Adelaide business Enabled Solutions.

The duo said they decided to launch the channel in winter as many of the "make and do" segments will appeal to parents who have children cooped up inside and looking for activities

over the colder months. For that reason, in its heyday the show was particularly popular in Europe, says Dr Morrison, and they have uncovered some segments which have been dubbed in German which will be put up on the channel.

Dr Morrison said that these days not enough children are getting involved in hands-on activities.

"Children used to do a lot more making and doing but with the Xbox these days they only exercise their thumbs - they need to actually make stuff," he said.

Both hosts see the online delivery of *Curiosity Show* as a natural step into social media. "For a lot of material, especially making-and-

doing segments, online delivery is better than television," Dr Morrison said.

"You can freeze or replay segments to see how to make something. You couldn't do that on television."

"Some people have pirated segments out of the show and put them up (online) and already one of those has had 45,000 views," he said.

And the pair haven't ruled out heading back to the studio to record fresh material - if the demand is there.

Yesterday six-year-old Isaac Sheehan from Forestville was introduced to the pair's trademark gadgets and gizmos which for 18 years entertained nearly three generations of children - and their parents.

TOOTH FAIRY BATTLE

Parents fight US company

AUSSIE parents are joining the fight against a US company trying to turn the Tooth Fairy into a multi-million dollar global money-spinner.

The company, The Royal Council of Real Fairyland, has a significant online presence, with millions of hits from worldwide users, including more than 400,000 from Australia. Aimed at girls aged five to 10, the site encourages users to pay for monthly subscrip-

tions, buy Tooth Fairy-related merchandise and spend money in exchange for letters from Tooth Fairy characters.

But an online campaign by groups such as Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood is under way to bring a stop to the company's expansion.

Australian advocacy group The Parents' Jury called the venture "another example of business turning childhood into a commercial opportunity".

The Advertiser, 20 July 2013

I PAID FOR IPAD GAME SURPRISE

THE call from my panicked friend came early. She had just noticed \$1000 spent with the Apple iTunes store added to her credit card.

I felt sick for her.

She had called me as she knew we had a similar incident a few months back, albeit it on a much cheaper scale.

My daughter had spent \$53 buying shiny gold coins spilling from a treasure chest in a children's game.

We had thought our settings were in place so that any purchase with the iTunes store required a password, which we've kept secret from our two girls.

We found out the hard way we were wrong. A password was needed to buy new games, but not for in-app purchases.

So without realising she was doing anything wrong, my seven-year-old daughter had made her first purchase on my credit card.

Confused and angry, my husband immediately called the iTunes store and explained what had happened. He then had to detail our complaint in an email, and was then given a 1800 number to phone to speak with an Apple representative.

The helpful representative was receptive to our case, and advised that we would be given a credit to the iTunes store.

She then talked my husband through how to change our settings to ensure no more surprises turned up on my credit card.

My husband was told to go into the 'settings' icon, scroll down to



RACHEL MOORE

'general' and then head to 'restrictions'. From here, he had to scroll down to 'in-app purchases', and make sure it was turned on.

My friend was caught in a similar trap. It led to her daughter's treasure chest to be overflowing with purchases – two of which cost a whopping \$109 each.

My friend also promptly called the iTunes store and explained her case. She was given a \$1000 refund and has since updated her password protection.

So there's a lesson here for anyone with an iTunes account.

Check and double-check your settings on a regular basis, to make sure a password is required for ALL your purchases with the iTunes store.

To Apple's credit, my friend and I both had good outcomes from our experiences, but the wait to find out whether you're \$1000 poorer or not is just not worth the stress.

For the latest information on setting up your iTunes account appropriately, visit apple.com/au/support/iTunes

Have you had a similar experience with password security on iTunes?
Comment at advertiser.com.au

HEALTH THERE is more evidence of the benefits of getting enough sleep. Research presented to the European Congress on Obesity suggests primary school children who don't get enough sleep or who vary their sleep patterns are more likely to have a poor diet. In the Danish study, for every hour less that children slept they were eating a diet that contained 32 per cent more energy from sugar-sweetened beverages and 15 per cent more energy from added sugar. For every 30-minute variability in sleep duration the children consumed 18 per cent more energy from sugar-sweetened beverages.

SEAN PARNELL

Guardian Messenger 3/7/13

TV screens dominate children's free time

JORDANNA SCHRIEVER
HEALTH REPORTER

CHILDREN with electronic equipment in their bedrooms take 1000 footsteps a day less than those without, according to new figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The snapshot into the physical activity and sedentary behaviour of Australians, released yesterday, shows we spend considerable amounts of time sitting – in front of TVs and computers – while under one in five people manages the recommended 10,000 steps a day. It shows adults spend two months a year on sedentary leisure activities.

ABS director of health surveys, Juanita Pettit said the data gives information about behaviours linked to Australia's high obesity rate.

"In 2011-12 children aged five-17 years spent on average nearly one and a half hours per day watching TV and close to half an hour a day using the internet for non-homework purposes," she said. "In addition, boys spent over half an hour playing electronic games, with girls a mere eight minutes."

The figures also show half of Aussie kids aged 5-17 have access to screen equipment in their rooms, and spend 2.5 hours per day using them.

Those without screen equipment in their rooms took an average 1000 steps more per day, and spent under two hours on screens.

"Fifteen-17-year-olds were 'big' screen users, with three-quarters reporting having access to a TV, computer, video games console and/or other screen-based equipment in their room," Ms Pettit said.

"The trend also starts at a young age with close to one in six toddlers (two to four year olds) having access to media equipment in their bedrooms," she said. On the adult front, the figures show a similar result for both sexes – an average of 13 hours per week spent watching TV.

The Advertiser 20/7/13



BUSY BOY: Harvey Brown, of Warradale, has precious little time to spare. The 12-year-old plays ooty, volleyball and cricket.
Picture: SIMON CROSS

Children want more time to just chill out

FRAZZLED Australian children need less homework and more "chill-out" time, the children's rights watchdog said yesterday.

National Children's Commissioner Megan Mitchell said children felt overloaded by homework and after-school activities.

"It's not that they don't want to do any homework but they find it stressful if there's a lot of it," she said.

Ms Mitchell said relaxation time was a priority for many children she interviewed during her national "listening tour". Children often asked to be involved in after-school sport, dance or music lessons, without realising the time and effort it takes.

"I think it's good to promote conversations between children and parents about whether it's too much for them - do they still want to

go to orchestra and choir, or just hang about?" she said. "The developing brain does need unstructured time to develop in optimal ways."

Andrea Brown, of Warradale, said her son, Harvey, 12, had a "reasonable amount" of homework and by the weekend wanted some quiet.

"He likes to chill out when he gets the chance," she said. "He spends a lot of time doing things so he needs some time just to be alone."

The Royal Australian College of Psychiatry's chair of child psychiatry, Dr Nick Kowalenko, said he advised parents to let children plan activities for one day each week or month.

Children also had a sense of fairness and concern over violence, bullying and drunkenness. They can have a say at www.humanrights.gov.au/big-banter - **Natasha Bita**

HOW KIDS WOULD RULE THE WORLD

Aussie school kids have told the National Children's Commissioner what they wish for:

"Bring pets to school."

"The first movie a kid ever goes to see, like *Toy Story*, should be free."

"There should be a limit of two alcoholic drinks per person per day, if you choose to drink alcohol at all."

"No slow internet."

"Bus tickets are free."

"Everyone has the right to love and marry who you like."

"Chocolate bunnies."

"No bed time."

"People come back to life."

"Holidays whenever."

"There should be no guns."

"Everyone should have a place to live."

"Everyone should be safe."

"Lots of lollies."

"No bullying."

"Everyone has a horse."

"No uniforms."

"Orphans have good families."

"The Beatles come back to life."

"No smoking."

"No talking behind your back."

"Everyone is healthy."

"Fines for littering."

"Dead things can come back to life."

"Everyone has the same rank, nobody is higher or lower."



Experts slam Coke obesity 'weight wash'

■ Rachel Wells

Public health experts have labelled Coca-Cola's new campaign against obesity a "smokescreen".

In TV advertisements on Tuesday night and in newspapers on Wednesday morning, the soft-drink giant vowed to help fight obesity in Australia by increasing availability of smaller portion sizes, offering more low-kilojoule products and supporting physical activity programs.

Coca-Cola Australia's customer and commercial director, Phil Roberts, said it was "committed to being part of the solution" to Australia's obesity problem.

However, Rob Moodie, professor of public health at the University of Melbourne, said if Coca-Cola was serious about fighting obesity "they would be doing things that really do work".

As well as reducing its advertising to young children the company would be "encouraging other

companies to do the same, and they wouldn't put 10 teaspoons of sugar in a can of Coke", Professor Moodie says.

Coca-Cola's initiatives include teaming up with the not-for-profit Bicycle Network to increase "access to bikes and motivating participants to get riding".

"This is a classic smokescreen," Professor Moodie said. "We know obesity is a commercial success and Coca-Cola has been a huge participant and beneficiary of that

commercial success ... Their job is not health. It's making money."

"While it is good that they are offering more lower-kilojoule options and smaller portion sizes, will they be selling any fewer high-sugar drinks?"

Jane Martin from the Obesity Policy Coalition agrees. "We call it 'weight washing'. And it's a bit of a worry when you see these large corporations get involved in public health," she said. "They always focus on physical activity to draw

attention away from the contribution of their products to overweight and obesity."

Coca-Cola Australia's group marketing manager, Donna Mulholland, said: "I know there is going to be a lot of scepticism ... but I think we would invite people to judge us on our actions."

"We've probably been doing things in the background ... what's different is we're going out and talking about it because we think we can be part of the solution."

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