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PETALING JAYA, April 23 (Bernama) -- A 'Turn Off The TV Week' campaign is being carried out to encourage parents to switch off the television at home and spend time with their children doing other things, said the chief executive officer of the Consumer Research and Resource Centre (CRRC) Paul Selva Raj.

"The 'Turn Off The TV Week' is focused on bringing family closeness back. With the spare time, it would give us a chance to think, read, create and do more productive things together with our family members and be more engaging in our communities," he told reporters at the Kinderland Kindergarten, here Thursday.

This week marks the 14th annual campaign since it was first introduced in 1995.

Selva Raj further explained that television cuts out family time and it is a leading cause of obesity in both adults and children.

Apart from that, Selva Raj stressed that children today spent too much time watching television, playing video games or using the computer for an average of six hours per day.

There was very little eye contact between children and parents in today's environment, instead they prefer to be more closed, which is unhealthy, Selva Raj said.

"Now...today, there are chat-rooms where our children are able to chat to people from all over the world but we, as parents are not able to control what is happening in cyber-space and this can lead to unwanted, unhealthy activities," he stressed.

Former pre-school teacher Anushka Hundunwala fully supports the campaign stating that even cartoon shows like 'Tom and Jerry' and 'The Simpsons' were very violent.

"I only let my son watch Sesame Street and Barney because they are educational. It is important to show children good versus bad, right versus wrong. We should mould them from tender ages and be able to control them," she said.

The 'Turn Off The TV Week' campaign is organised by the Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations, CRRC and Crestar Education (M) Sdn Bhd.

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