

Healthy Easter activities

(NC)—Sugar cream-filled eggs and marshmallow bunnies somehow hopped into your kitchen cupboard last Easter, but you've vowed not to let it happen again. With childhood obesity rates on the rise in Canada, more parents are looking for ways to get their kids active and strong. Here are some suggestions for parents to change the usual candy-coated tradition:

1. Buy pastel plastic eggs from a dollar store and fill them with stickers, encouraging notes, or small toys.
2. If your kids need to have a sugary sweet, buy dark chocolate kisses or squares with 70 per cent or more pure cocoa, which contain helpful antioxidants. Other sweet alternatives include organic gummy candies or lollipops made with real fruit juice. Just make sure your kids eat snacks in moderation.
3. Be creative about where you hide the Easter eggs. Make your kids work for their bounty! Hide eggs outside, upstairs, at a local park, on another parent, and give them a time limit so they'll have to get moving.
4. Instill compassion into your child's heart. After the hunt, count how many eggs the child has found and explain that each egg represents a dollar amount that will go towards a gift for impoverished children in another country. Purchase one or more gift catalogue items from a reputable children's charity such as Christian Children's Fund of Canada and explain the importance of remembering children around the world who are in need.

Incorporate these ideas into your Easter plans and have a heart-friendly holiday.