



2026

Event and Activity Guide

For individuals, schools, workplaces, sporting clubs and community organisations

Saturday 24 October 2026

Unplug from social media. Reconnect with what matters.

24 October
Unplug24

About Unplug24

Unplug24 asks Australians to spend 24 hours away from social media. Set the apps aside for a day and spend that time somewhere else.

With family. With friends. At sport. In the community. Around a table. Outdoors. Doing the things that rarely compete well with something designed to hold our attention.

The campaign takes place on the anniversary of Mac Holdsworth's death.

Mac was 17 years old. He loved his family, his mates, and his sport. In 2023, he took his own life after being targeted in an online sexual extortion scam. His father Wayne founded SmackTalk so other families would better understand the risks young people face online and know what to do when something goes wrong.

Unplug24 is part of that broader effort.

Most of the relationships that matter to us are built through time and attention. The more present we are in a relationship, the more likely it is that someone notices when things are going well, when they are struggling, or when they need help.

That is true for families. It is true for friendships. It is true for schools, sporting clubs, workplaces and communities.

Twenty-four hours will not change the world.

It is enough time, however, to notice what fills our attention and what emerges when we create a little space.

In 2024, more than 134,000 Australians took part. In 2025, participation grew to more than 828,000. This year, we are inviting even more communities to join them.

Monday 19 October to Friday 23 October

- This is when schools and workplaces build momentum.
- Use the week to start conversations, hold activities and encourage registrations.

Saturday 24 October

- This is campaign day.
- For many communities, that means local sport.
- Players, coaches, volunteers, parents and supporters will already be gathering across the country. Unplug24 gives those communities a reason to pause and think about why being present matters.
- Choose the activities that fit naturally within what you already do.
- The less complicated it is, the more likely people are to participate.

Three Things To Do First

Register

Registration is free and takes less than a minute.

It helps us stay in touch with you, recognise the people involved, and provide campaign resources.

Register: www.smacktalk.com.au/unplug24

Set Up A Fundraising Page or Pledge

Participation is free.

Fundraising helps SmackTalk continue delivering free presentations to schools, clubs and community groups across Australia

Fundraise: unplug24.smacktalk.com.au

Some donation options include:

- \$24: one dollar for every hour unplugged
- \$48: your pledge and someone else's
- \$240+: includes an Unplug24 cap* and signed thank-you letter

*while stocks last for individual donations from unpluggers

Book A SmackTalk Session

A SmackTalk session provides the context behind the campaign.

It explains the online risks young people face, what to look for, and how to respond when something goes wrong.

Sessions are free for schools, workplaces, sporting clubs and community organisations.

Enquiries: hello@smacktalk.com.au

Ideas For Schools

- Schools are often where the conversation starts.
- Students take it home. Parents talk about it at dinner. Families make decisions together.
- That gives schools an opportunity to do more than promote a campaign. They can start conversations that continue well beyond one day.

The Final Bell

- Bring students together on Friday afternoon.
- Take five minutes to remind students about the campaign and why the school is participating.
- Then invite everyone to begin the weekend together without phones, without their families on social media.

Breakfast Before The Bell

- Open the school early on Friday morning.
- Offer tea, coffee, fruit and toast. Keep it simple.
- Ask families to leave phones in their pockets and spend twenty minutes talking before the day begins.

Acoustic performances in the school yard

Stage some acoustic performances in the yard from school musicians before and after school and during recess and lunch

Twenty-Four Hours Back

- Ask every student one question:

If somebody gave you 24 extra hours, what would you do with them?

- Put the responses on a wall.
- The display becomes a powerful explanation of the campaign.

Sport Before School

- Open the oval, courts or gym before class.
- Run staff versus student games.
- Mix year levels.
- Create reasons for people to spend time together.

Wear Yellow Friday

- Yellow is Mac's colour.
- Invite students and staff to wear yellow and contribute a gold coin donation if they choose.

Family Registration Challenge

- Which class can register the highest percentage of families?

- The value is not the competition.
- The value is the conversation happening at home.

Start The Conversation

- For older students, use the week to discuss online safety, sexual extortion, help-seeking and support.
- These conversations are often most effective when delivered through a SmackTalk session.

Ideas For Workplaces

Workplaces bring together people from every stage of life.

Parents, grandparents, mentors, community volunteers, sporting coaches and young employees often work together within the same team.

That makes workplaces a useful place to start conversations that extend beyond the office.

Unplug24 Morning Tea without phones

- Tea.
- Coffee.
- Food on a table.
- Phones away
- Twenty minutes.
- Explain why the organisation is participating and invite people to register before the weekend.

Leadership Participation

- People notice what leaders choose to do.
- A short message from the CEO or leadership team gives the campaign credibility inside the organisation.

The Friday Switch-Off

- At the end of the workday, encourage teams to remove social media apps before heading into the weekend.
- Some people reinstall them on Sunday.
- Some do not.

Lunch Away From The Desk

- Put phones in a box.
- Sit people together.
- See where the conversation goes.

Walking Meetings

- For meetings with two or three people, leave the boardroom behind.
- Walk and talk.
- Many teams find they solve problems faster when nobody is looking at a screen.

The Kitchen Board

- Place a sheet of butcher's paper in the lunchroom.
- Ask one question:

What are you reconnecting with?

- Leave it up all week.

Match Your People

Match staff donations dollar for dollar or contribute to a percentage of employee registrations.

Visible support encourages participation.

Support Parents

- Many parents are trying to understand the same online risks that led to the creation of SmackTalk.
- A workplace session provides practical information and a common language for discussing these issues at home.

Toolbox Talks

- For field crews, sites and shift teams, keep it simple.
- Five minutes at the start of a shift.
- A QR code.
- A conversation.

Ideas For Sporting Clubs

Few places do community better than local sport.

Every weekend, people arrive for far more than a game.

They catch up with friends.

They volunteer.

They support their children.

They spend time with people they have known for years.

That sense of belonging is exactly why sporting clubs matter.

The Unplug24 Round

- Dedicate a round of fixtures to the campaign.
- Yellow laces.
- Yellow armbands.
- Yellow tape on goalposts.
- A short announcement before play begins.
- Keep it visible.

A Minute Of Noise

- Before the first game, bring everyone together.
- Invite the crowd to clap, cheer and make noise for sixty seconds.
- It should feel like sport.

Match activity to the unplug24 challenge

- Run/walk/swim 24 laps
- Sing or play an instrument for 24 minutes
- Play 24 rounds of “round robins”

The Sideline Challenge

Challenge parents to watch one complete game without touching their phones.

No filming.

No scrolling.

Just watch.

Then ask their child whether they noticed.

Families On The Field

- Run a parents versus kids match before the first game or after the last.
- Follow it with a barbecue, coffee van or breakfast.
- Keep the focus on fun.

Registration Station

- Set up one table outside the clubrooms.
- Two volunteers.
- A QR code.
- An explanation of the campaign.
- Personal conversations remain the most effective form of promotion.

Grade Against Grade

- Create a club ladder based on registrations or fundraising.

- Every team contributes.
- Every team belongs.

Presentation Day

If the season is ending, use your presentation day.

Ninety seconds from the club president is often enough to bring people on board.

Bring SmackTalk To Your Club

Wayne has found that the most powerful sessions are often those that bring players, parents and coaches into the same room.

People leave with shared information, shared understanding and a clearer sense of how to support one another.

Ideas For Community Organisations

Community groups already exist to bring people together.

Unplug24 gives them another reason to do it.

The Unpluggers' Table

- Set up a long table in a hall, park, street or clubroom.
- Everyone brings a plate.
- Nobody brings a phone.

Saturday Morning Outdoors

- Organise a walk, fishing trip, park run, beach clean-up or working bee.
- Put people side by side with a task to do and conversation tends to take care of itself.

Give The Hours Away

- Use some of the day helping somebody else.
- Visit someone who is isolated.
- Help a neighbour.
- Volunteer for a local organisation.

Games Afternoon

Open the hall and fill it with things people can do together.

- Cards.
- Chess.
- Dominoes.
- Table tennis.
- Board games.

Share A Skill

- Invite older members to teach younger ones something practical.
- Bake bread.
- Change a tyre.
- Tie a fishing knot.
- Repair a bike.
- Play an instrument.
- Advertise it as 24 skills to learn in a day

Phones out of sight

- Run one meeting during the week with every phone left out of sight
- Then talk about the experience over a cup of tea.

Music In The Room

- Host an open mic night, choir performance or local band.
- No phones,
- Unplugged if you wish.

Light It yellow

Ask councils, community groups and local leaders to show support throughout the week.

Bring SmackTalk To Your Community

SmackTalk presentations are available online and in person across Australia and are provided free of charge.

Bringing People With You

Most participation comes from people who already know you.	Members of parliament
Families.	Staff.
Parents.	Sponsors.
Volunteers.	Start there.
Tell them early.	Remind them again a week later.
Remind them again the day before.	Local businesses can help.
The bakery.	The pub.
The physio.	The hardware store.
The people your community already trusts.	Social media also has a role.

Most people will hear about Unplug24 through the very platforms the campaign asks them to step away from.	Use social media during the lead-up. Then go quiet on campaign day.
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Working With Local Media

You may wish to invite your local journalists to your event. The strongest local stories are specific:

- A school breakfast.
- A sporting club dedicating a round.
- A workplace bringing staff together.
- Focus on what is happening in your community and why people are getting involved.
- Keep media releases short.
- Give journalists somebody local to speak to.
- Give them something to photograph or video.
- 240 or 2400 students in yellow.

When speaking about Mac's story, do so with care.

The campaign exists because one family chose to turn a devastating experience into something that could help others.

What We Can Provide

We can provide:

- Logos
- Poster/flyer downloads
- Email signature banners
- Social media graphics
- Virtual backgrounds
- Registration QR codes
- Fundraising QR codes

Merchandise, including Unplug24 caps and squeeze footies, is available to purchase for events.

Get In Touch

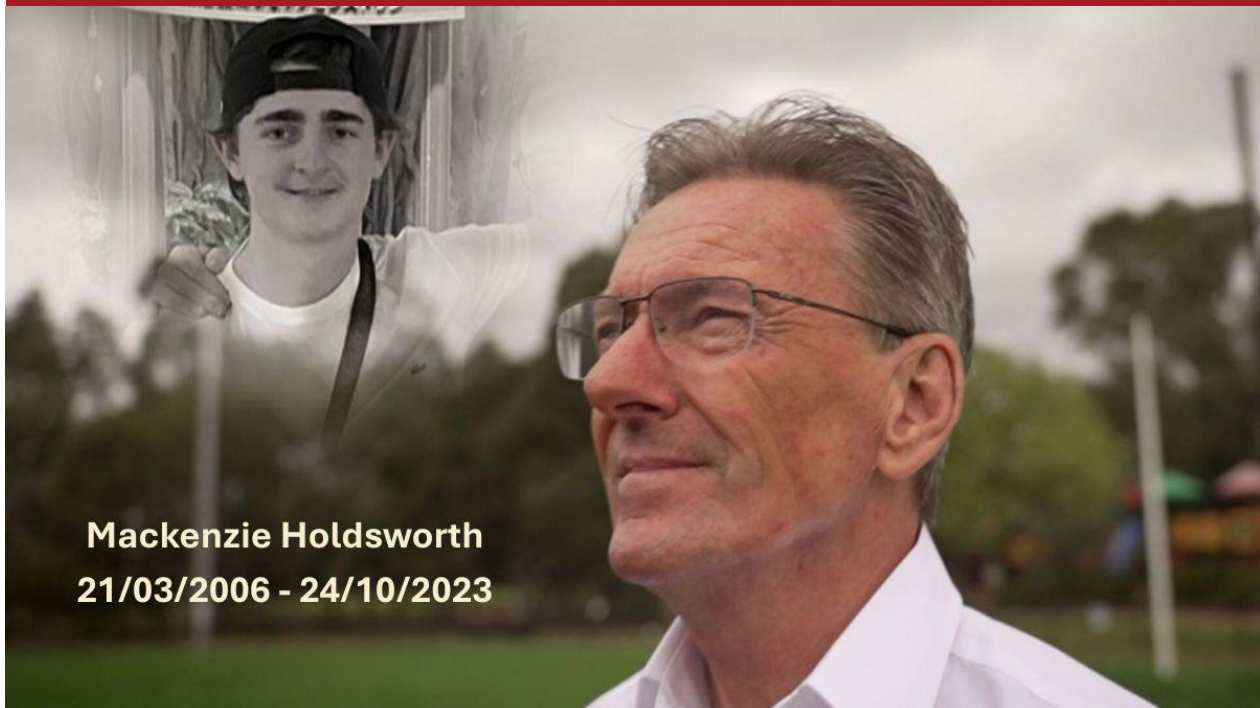
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Fundraise: unplug24.smacktalk.com.au

Book a free presentation: hello@smacktalk.com.au

Questions: hello@smacktalk.com.au

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Mackenzie Holdsworth
21/03/2006 - 24/10/2023