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<https://www.instagram.com/portstephensunplugged/>



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## Port Stephens Unplugged

The Unplugged Movement Ltd is a community focused not-for-profit and registered charity. Port Stephens Unplugged was founded by Kate Preston (Clinical Psychologist) and Barb Everson (Business Coach) to protect the mental health and wellbeing of the community. Port Stephens Unplugged aims to collaborate with schools, families, community groups, health services, local government and other organisations to improve mental health outcomes. The movement will organise, support and deliver programs, events and activities that strengthen mental health, resilience and social connection. Our primary goal is around empowering individuals, particularly parents, to make informed decisions about technology and boundaries in their homes.

The Unplugged Movement aims to connect local families with established resources such as the E-Safety Commissioner and “Wait Mate.” Wait Mate is an Australian adaptation of the ‘Smartphone Free Childhood’ (SFC) Movement in the UK and ‘Wait Until 8th’ in the US. These are movements that encourage parents to pledge to keep their children smartphone-free for longer. Additionally, Port Stephens Unplugged promotes connection of like-minded individuals (together we are stronger!) and easy access to the upcoming unplugged database of upcoming events and offline engagement opportunities.

Being part of the movement;

- Become a Community Member (Donation [minimum \$1] - Ability to vote at AGM and select board of directors, view and add to the ‘Unplugged Database of upcoming events,’ connect with other like-minded families and build a community committed to prioritising mental health and wellbeing).
- Become a Volunteer (various roles available)
- Join as a Health/Allied Health Partner (no cost but donations welcome. Invitation only, requests sent to [ps@unplugged.org.au](mailto:ps@unplugged.org.au))
- Business Sponsorship (\$\$ - Tiered sponsorship available - Advertising at events and in communications)



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## Upcoming Projects and Long-Term Goals

- Port Stephens “**Connect and Play Family Days**” – Quarterly family days in Port Stephens outside peak holidays time to connect locals and provide opportunities for digital education and fun in real-time. Proposed first event in November 2026.
- Port Stephens Unplugged **monthly newsletter** starting in 2027 on unplugged updates as well as a collation of “what’s on” each month to encourage active community participation and engagement.
- Work collaboratively with Port Stephens LGA Department of Education and Port Stephens Council (around erecting security cameras) to **open gates of schools after school hours and on weekends** – Provide an outdoor space where children have a sense of belonging and connection and can connect face-to-face with peers and enjoy access to publicly funded facilities such as ovals and basketball courts.
- Work collaboratively with schools in the Port Stephens area to **remove personal devices/ handheld technology from primary school classrooms** (except specified technology classes) and any handheld device recommendations (including e-readers) [excluding special circumstances eg. disability advice from professionals or cases of distance education]. Work collaboratively with high schools to **minimise use of devices in classrooms** to prioritise low-stimulation engagement and encourage critical thinking and creativity (and sitting with boredom), rather than having personal devices available considering the impact this has both in the classroom and in the home environment.
- Work collaboratively with schools in the Port Stephens LGA to **remove images of students from school’s publicly accessible social media pages**, in accordance with advice from the E-Safety Commissioner regarding posting images of children online.
- Work collaboratively with Port Stephens council to **erect community noticeboards** in concentrated town centres or shopping centres for local events and opportunities for connection, sports, hobbies, groups etc.
- Produce an **annual “Port Stephens Unplugged” community presentation around safe and balanced technology**.
- Create a **Port Stephens Unplugged Magazine** in 2028 for distribution in all waiting rooms around Port Stephens (collaboration with businesses) to advertise community events and connection opportunities and educate on technology.
- Partner with local businesses (eg. retreat and wellness venues) and allied health professionals on **digital detox retreats / bootcamps**.
- Produce **annual cyber safety workshops for teenagers** in Port Stephens.