

PROVIDE THE RIGHT **SPACE** AND THEY WILL COME

At the recent 2015 Asia Pacific Cities Summit, Randi Zuckerberg, brother of Facebook creator Mark, said 'society has become so "plugged in" we need to address our digital dependence'. **ROBYN MCKENZIE** tells us how her library had already recognised the need for digital relief.

The Mary MacKillop Library was ahead of the curve when we reset our lunchtime agenda 18 months ago. This is when we introduced Digital Detox Days on Tuesdays and Fridays, which has proved to be one of the library's most popular initiatives. It did not take long to realise it was just the sort of break many of our students needed.

What do they do? They communicate with each other for a start. It is great to see them talking to one another, face-to-face, without using a mobile phone. They also play board games, get creative with Lego and tackle Querkles (a bigger and better version of colour-by-numbers). The colouring books are a hit and there are also students who create their own drawings, proving that 'a drawing a day keeps the cobwebs away'. The introduction of Sizzling Sketches – the



At work in the Mary MacKillop Library



Students from St Patrick's College with a Querkle

library provides students with notebooks, which they fill with drawings and thoughts – is catching on. These notebooks will become part of the library's permanent collection.

It might not be the quiet place that some people expect libraries to be, but it is apparently contagious, as Digital Detox now happens every lunchtime.



Just like the Zuckerbergs, the library staff also feel passionately about 'unplugging to refresh' and have witnessed the benefits first-hand. Who knew we would start a new craze for UNO, and how competitive it could be?

Before we introduced Digital Detox Days, the computers on the main floor were checked out to students in 10-minute time slots throughout lunchtime with students lining up for their turn. Now, maybe only one or two students can be found on a computer; the others have found something they would much rather do. 🎲

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