



National Unplugging Day

ACTIVITIES

- 1 Six sentences have been removed from the text. Choose the one that best fits in each gap.
- A which has seen restaurants ban mobile phones and national parks offer technology creches,
 - B after she was contacted by parents looking for advice
 - C who have impressionable young children about to start the scary world
 - D there were no phones, no Wi-Fi and all electricity was solar-powered or kinetic
 - E are valuable for allowing people to step back and examine their digital habits
 - F they might do it every Sunday.

National Unplugging Day is a nationwide initiative by the website My Family Club, it encourages families to go on a digital detox for a day and reconnect with each other offline. My Family Club’s founder and chief executive, Gemma Johnson, said she decided to launch the initiative last year 1 on how to manage their children’s screen time and digital burnout. After a successful trial with 1,000 participants in 2014, this year National Unplugging Day has been registered as an official national day and been heavily promoted, primarily – and ironically – online. So far, more than 7,000 people have registered and pledged to go tech-free. Among them are Gemma Chase, her husband and two daughters, aged six and nine, from Buckinghamshire. She thinks it is a brilliant initiative for families 2 of getting their own phones in a couple of years. She said the day is as much about getting parents off their devices and engaging with their kids as it is about loosening the children’s grip on the iPad. Parents need to be setting their own example. Chase is so won over by the idea that she thinks she will make unplugging a weekly event, 3. Dr Richard Graham, consultant psychiatrist specialising in technology addiction at the Nightingale hospital in London says that as the research piles up regarding the mental, social, emotional and physical costs of spending so much time in front of screens, initiatives such

as National Unplugging Day 4. He thinks people do not really understand the motivations for connecting to devices and the internet until they step away. We need in our culture, through policy or etiquette, to have spaces where we are given permission not to have to stay connected. National Unplugging Day is modelled on a US project, the National Day of Unplugging, which was started in 2010 by Reboot, a Jewish cultural group, and encourages people to take a “technology Sabbath”. Both initiatives are part of a larger movement of shutting down and switching off, 5 so people can lock up their gadgets and enjoy the surroundings out from behind a screen. Moreover, 1,500 people gathered for the first largescale screen-free music festival. At Innocent Unplugged, held in a forest in Kent, 6, produced by festival-goers on bicycles and see-saws. This event taps into an ever-increasing lethargy into being plugged in all the time. Everyone wanted to watch good bands without 79 screens in front of them or worrying about what filter on Instagram to use. Dr Graham says a day without technology can be extremely helpful as a step toward developing healthy technology habits.

Adapted from *The Guardian*

- 2 Use a monolingual dictionary and find definitions for the following words.
- 1 Detox
 - 2 Burnout
 - 3 To pledge
 - 4 To loosen
 - 5 Grip
 - 6 To step away
 - 7 See-saw
 - 8 Creche
- 3 What is National Unplugging Day? What is it for? Write a short paragraph to answer these questions.