

AVALON

# Students off Facebook

'SOCIAL MEDIA IN GENERAL REALLY CREATES A FALSE SENSE OF COMMUNITY'



## RED BELT CHALLENGE

For six weeks, participants are giving up:

- Social media.
- Junk food.
- Additives such as coffee, alcohol and cigarettes
- Violent video games.
- Music with negative lyrics.
- Bad language.
- Mobile phones can be used to make calls only and are banned between 8pm and 7am.
- Gossiping.
- Everyone also picks two areas of their life that they would like to improve.

LEFT: Some of the participants in the Red Belt Challenge.

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"Social media in general really creates a false sense of community. By doing this I'm challenging them to instead focus on face-to-face, real relationships."

The challenge also rules out additives such as coffee,

negative music and video games, bad language and gossiping. Mobile phones are allowed for phone calls only and have to be turned off between 8pm and 7am.

Participants are also asked to train more in martial arts during the six weeks and

choose two areas of their life that they would like to improve. "It can be anything from improving the relationship with your partner, to getting better at a subject at school," Smith said.

It started last Wednesday and about 20 people from the

Avalon dojo aged 12-60 are taking part.

Brittany Ryan, of Avalon, said avoiding violent movies had been the hardest part so far. "I love action movies," she said.

Logging off Facebook had not been as hard as expected,

she said. If anyone breaches the rules the whole group will be punished with extra days added to the challenge, which is meant to finish on April 27.

Could you give up these things for six weeks?  
manlydaily.com.au

MANLY VALE

# Kiernan joins pool clean-up

CLEAN Up Australia Day founder Ian Kiernan (pictured) will visit the Mermaid Pool on Saturday after his previous appearance was cancelled due to rain.

Mr Kiernan will lend a hand in cleaning up the Manly Vale pool and form part of a chain of people who will remove sediment, silt and rubbish.



The clean-up day will also feature a free native plant giveaway from Warringah Council and Manly Vale Community Nursery.

Ten years ago on Clean Up Australia Day, the Manly Vale community got together and removed four truckloads of dumped rubbish from the pool, including car parts, cookers and shopping trolleys.

Volunteers are asked to meet at 9am outside the UNSW Water Lab gates, on the western corner of King St, Manly Vale.

Drinks will be held afterwards to celebrate.

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# Teenagers give up Facebook, Twitter and texting as a lesson in mindfulness

*22 Mar 12 @ 12:04am by Boel Eriksson*

The Red Belt Challenge will see students at Hoshin Jutsu Australia in Avalon banned from using social media, among other things, for six weeks Pic:KELLIE LAFRANCHI IMAGINE banning a teenager from using social media, listening to popular music, drinking soft drinks and gossiping.

An Avalon martial arts group has issued the challenge to its members to teach them mindfulness.

The Red Belt Challenge started in 1996 at Hoshin Jutsu Australia in Avalon, the headquarters of the martial art in the Australia-Pacific Region.

Several other dojos in the world, including Canada, the US and the UK, are also doing the annual challenge.

Principal and Sensei Rose Smith came up with the idea. This year will be the first time social media is included, causing Smith to cut the normal challenge time of 12 weeks down to six.

“I know it’s going to be tough for many to give up Facebook,” she said.

“But it’s such an addictive pastime and it’s so much part of young people’s lives now.

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