

# Students go unplugged for Famine

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IF YOU flick Jayden O'Loughlin a text this weekend don't expect a reply: he's switching off his cell phone for the 40-Hour Famine.

Jayden, a year 9 student at Opihi College, is one of thousands of New Zealanders taking part in the annual event from today until Sunday.

He will give up all electronics and sleep in a cardboard box to help raise money for the cause.

"There will be no cellphone and I use that quite a bit and the internet so it will be pretty hard to do.

"I'll be turning [all electronics] off and trying not to think about it." Lights will also be off limits to Jayden throughout the event, which he is taking part in for the first time.

Electronics was not his first choice of luxury to give up. He had planned to go without food but he was recently struck with an illness that left him unwell for five weeks. He thought about not taking part at all, but decided that would be too hard.

School famine co-ordinator Jeff Key said he had received an "amazing response" from students taking part this year.

"We've got lots of kids [taking part]. I'm impressed with the enthusiasm and attitude of these

kids to try to make a difference."

Mountainview High School students will also give up luxuries this weekend.

Deputy head boy Daniel Deans, one of the school's famine committee members, plans to go without food from 8pm Friday until noon on Sunday, a task that is likely to be more difficult than it sounds, he said. "I've never gone without eating, I don't even enjoy skipping a meal."

Head girl Zoe Lindsay will also go without food during the famine to help the school raise its target of \$3000. "We've handed out over 100 books so we are doing really well this year and people are getting right into it.

"We definitely know there's a lot of sponsorship happening."

Money raised this year will help improve the health of malnourished children living in Bangladesh, create job opportunities for disabled youth in Cambodia and rehabilitate children freed from bonded labour in India.

It will also provide vocational training for disadvantaged youth in East Timor and improve the education and nutrition of orphaned children in Rwanda.

Mountainview High School's famine committee members will host a sleepover at the college during the weekend so participants can support each other throughout the event.

"The sleepover helps people who haven't done it before, so it's not such a scary, daunting task," Zoe said.

Students can decide what luxury they will go without for the famine including TV and PlayStation, or even talking.

And what can your money buy?

\$8: Two food packets for Bangladesh. Each packet contains rice, beans, nuts, oil and molasses and feeds a child for a day.

\$10: Sanitation for Bangladesh: water and hygiene training for a community.

\$30: Nutrition training, Bangladesh. Nutrition workshops for mothers and young adults.

\$35: Healthcare, Bangladesh. Training for 20 health workers and basic supplies for clinics.

\$50: Food provision, Bangladesh. This will provide vegetable seeds for a home garden.

\$150: Learning materials, Tanzania. This provides five vulnerable children with materials so they can go to school.

\$425 will give 100 vulnerable children basic needs such as food, bedding and soap.

\$500 will enrol 50 children, who are vulnerable to child labour, in a mainstream school.

\$700 will allow 50 orphaned or at-risk children to receive treatment for diseases such as malaria



**Going without:** Mountainview High School students, from left, Zoe Lindsay, Steph Mason, Paula Gruber and Daniel Deans are giving up their luxuries for a good cause. The students are taking part in the 40-Hour Famine this weekend to help raise money for people in need. Photo: RACHAEL COMER

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