

Cartoon: Trae Pateman

Technology risks are still on the rise

EDITORIAL

By **ETHAN HAMID, ELIZABETH ROBINSON, COOPER HUGHES and RILEY WAY**

WIND, rain and floods sent technology users into a storm recently when the Hunter's electricity was cut. Storm damage made the lives of some people fall apart because they couldn't do things such as make phone calls, access social media and charge dead batteries.

The impact of technology on people's daily lives has increased over the past decade and has resulted in obesity, laziness and optical issues. Society is very dependent on technology to the point where we are sometimes unaware of the happenings in our community.

We rely on technology so much that we use it more than we go outside and socialise, reducing our exposure to vitamin D.

The disadvantages of technology are becoming bigger as it advances. Computers can decrease how much you learn because autocorrect often spells words for you. This can make it harder for us to write at school and in the workplace.

Another negative is that technology promotes inactivity and increases obesity because some apps can be addictive and have a bad influence on people.

We generally lay on the couch or bed playing video games, or watching videos. Kids used to play board games or play outside.

Technology can also affect how much quality sleep people get. Researchers say that instead of dreaming about something you love doing, technology gets in the way of that. This occurs because the light from electronics can affect a chemical in our body called melatonin. When we are on electronic devices the light effects the way melatonin works and makes it harder to fall asleep.

In some cases, people have become addicted to certain technology, causing antisocial behaviour. Kids have not been practising their social skills, which could have an impact on future job interviews.

The 21st century has been heavily affected by technology, causing stress on people in various way as well as illnesses including hearing loss, eye strain and blurred vision. These usually occur after staring at screens for too long said researchers from Glasgow University.

Would you risk your life for technology?

Calls to repair Frame Drive Bridge for good

By **JULIA BOYD, ANIKA RENDOTH and SHARNI HUNTER**

THE recent closure of Abermain's Frame Drive Bridge due to damage received during April's super storm and the uncertainty of any future development is a concern for many in the area.

"I have lived on Frame Drive for 51 years and three generations of my family have lived on this road. I used to ride my pony up and down in safety. It is definitely not safe to ride a horse or go for a walk on Frame Drive anymore because of the heavy traffic," resident Mrs Wilkinson said.

The use of the bridge has increased significantly since the opening of the Hunter Expressway with many Weston and Cessnock residents choosing to use the most direct exit, Hart Road, Gingers Lane and Frame Drive.

The Roads and Maritime Services have reported that "The average daily traffic on Gingers Lane, west of Sawyers Gully Road increased from 2555 in 2013 to 3292 last year after the expressway opened, which was in line with expectations."

The RMS is currently reviewing the impact on the local roads network and says "Any future upgrades will be determined in consultation with council once the proposals have been received and considered."

Cessnock Mayor, Bob Pynsent, confirms that the council have



Frame Drive Bridge remains closed. Picture: Anika Rendoth, Sharni Hunter and Julia Boyd

bridge and removing the weight limit. This will cost \$4.3 million."

He also said that the council is proposing to the RMS that due to the increased traffic that Hart Road, Gingers

submitted two proposals to the RMS to address the traffic concerns and to help with the redevelopment of Frame Drive Bridge.

"One proposal is to build a two-lane bridge with pedestrian access. Some of the surroundings will have to be cleared for the extension of the

Lane and Frame Drive are experiencing they should be reclassified as main roads, costing up to \$10 million to completely upgrade.

Council is expecting to receive a decision regarding these proposals by the end of this financial year.

Tumbling and trampolining into Nationals

By **LEILAH HODGES, CHARLOTTE McDUFF and KIARA FENNELL**

MILLFIELD gymnast, Anika Rendoth, will travel to Melbourne this month to compete at the 2015 Australian Gymnastics Championships in the tumbling and trampolining events.

The competition requires Anika to perform an individual and a synchronised trampolining routine that demonstrates 10 different skills, and an individual tumbling pass using five different skills.

To qualify, Anika took out first place during national trials earlier this year in trampolining and had similar success in tumbling.

"I train six hours on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, five hours on Saturdays, and two hours on Tuesdays and Fridays. My training involves working on my passes and connecting my skills and also strength and flexibility training when I'm at the Cessnock PCYC gym," Anika said.

"I like gymnastics



Anika Rendoth is a top gymnast.

because it's a fun sport and it's my passion. I started gymnastics when I was three-years-old and trampolining late December, 2014. I work

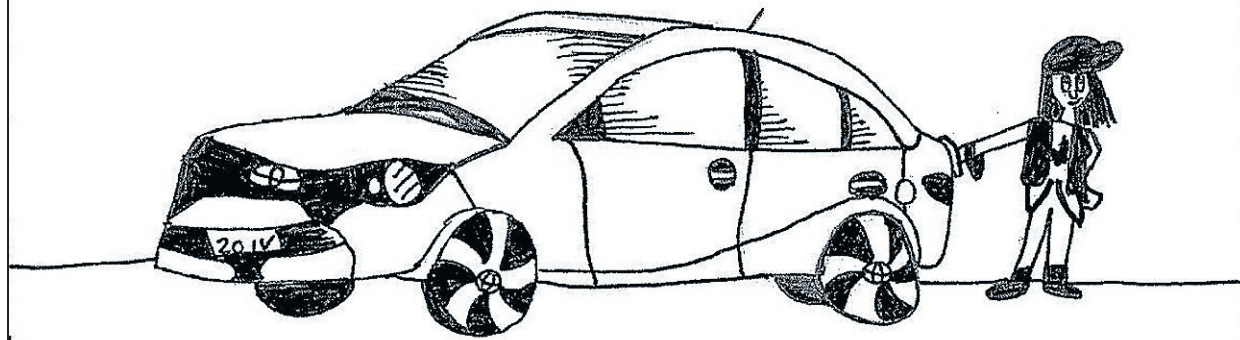
really hard and I don't want to give up now." Anika's coaches include Dzmity Shostau, Garth Eveleigh and Emma Longmuir.

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