



Cartoon: Fian Hanafi

## A need for kids to have their screens

### EDITORIAL

By **MITCHELL MOORE** and **TAYLER BOYCE**

TOO many parents these days are telling their kids to get off their electronic devices and get outside or do their homework.

They think their kids are just doing whatever they want. They think that their children are becoming addicted to the latest video games and music.

These parents need to stop banning their kids from playing these games.

What parents don't understand is that through technology we are actually learning valuable skills and improving our memory – skills that will actually help us in the future.

Many games are educational on the inside but appear to be simple games on the outside.

Popular games which actually have some educational benefit include *Minecraft*, *Skyrim* and *Lightbot-One Hour Coding*.

These games teach us maths, improve our language, help us build life skills like organisation and help us to visualise, plan and design.

These games are actually helpful for our future education and maybe even employment prospects.

Did you know 75 per cent of kids under eight years of age have a device? Interestingly, 38 per cent of kids under two have used a device.

These kids are learning vital life skills from such an early age. Just imagine the education that some children are missing out on, because their parents are preventing them from using their devices to their full potential.

These kids could get an educational advantage in their class if they were allowed to play these games.

Sure, these video games are very fun and entertaining, but they are also good for us and help us to learn.

It is estimated that 90 per cent of the world's population over the age of six will have a mobile phone by the year 2020.

So, parents, it's a good idea to let your children get used to using a device to give them the best start in their life and education.

Therefore some games are actually educational so parents must let their kids have more screen time to play these awesome games.

# Colourful characters driving for charity

By **SOPHIE HENDERSON**

A LARGE team of Hunter residents recently returned from another successful Newcastle Variety Bash.

Rankin Park grandmother Maureen Henderson has been participating in the event for 12 years.

Dean O'Brien, aka Mickey Mouse, and his crew members said the reason they participated in the Variety Bash is because it raises awareness for charities, including disadvantaged schools and disabled children.

Tracey Stephens, aka Miss Minion, believes that the best thing about the Variety Bash is seeing the children's faces light up when the participants all dressed in costumes arrive in their cars at the schools.

Crew member Kris O'Brien, Minnie Mouse, revealed the kids' favourite characters are Mickey and Minnie, Scooby Doo, the clowns and the Minions.

Another crew member, Garry Myer, has taken part every year since the beginning and Errol Hancock, aka Wally, has done all but one. This year was Kim Hellyer's first Variety Bash and he loved it so much that he said he would happily do it again. The Minions, Jamie Price and Tracey Stephens, also said they would love to take part next year.

Kim Hellyer said many people know little or nothing about the annual fundraiser. The Variety Bash is a charity event in which ordinary



Local Variety Bash crew members return from their fundraiser.

Picture: Sophie Henderson

people raise money and travel around the state donating the funds to disadvantaged schools and disabled children. The smallest school they visited this year had just 27 students. In previous years there was one school with only six students.

This year more than 200 people participated, raising \$720,000. They

travelled to Young, Condobalan, Mudgee, Mildura and back to Cessnock. Each car has to raise a minimum of \$4000 to enter.

The Newcastle bash started 24 years ago with 10 cars. It is now an annual event. To go in the Newcastle Variety Bash a car has to be a model from 1976 or earlier.

## Helping people live a healthier lifestyle

By **ZOIE WILLIAMS** and **SOPHIE HENDERSON**

YOU may know Woolworths for its fresh food, but do you know that they sponsor a local school to promote healthy eating?

Woolworths Jesmond store manager Derk Rinses said his store had been helping Jesmond Public School promote a healthy diet for about two years.

He said the store donated to the school's breakfast club, which is a program where on certain days of

the week the school provides kids with a healthy breakfast.

Woolworths donates seasonal fruits, juice, bread, a variety of different spreads, cereal and milk.

The store also supports events like the swimming carnival with bottled water and fruit as well as regular donations of fruit for Crunch 'n' Sip breaks.

Children from Jesmond school have visited the store to learn about where our food comes from, and staff from the

store have visited the school to introduce students to a variety of tasty food that is still healthy.

Mr Rinses said Jesmond was the main school he supported but he was willing to support other local schools.

He said it was important for Woolworths to be part of the local community rather than just be a big business.

Mr Rinses said the idea of the program was to promote a healthy lifestyle.



Woolworths store manager Derk Rinses.

Picture: Zoie Williams

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