

Editorial Years 7 - 9: Texting and driving; a deadly combination.

You see it every day, especially in freeway traffic. A car is weaving back and forth, speeding up then slowing down, or suddenly stopping. It's not a drunk driver, but no less dangerous. It's a driver taking a risk with not just their own life but with the lives of everyone who shares the road. Texting and driving is a deadly combination and we at the Craigieburn Herald fully support the new powers given to police by the government to crack down on these reckless and selfish individuals.

The New England Journal of Medicine reported that "motorists using a cell phone were four times more likely to have an accident than those not using a phone." The major problem is that the driver is not focused on the road, but on his or her conversation. Drivers who text or check social media in the car are very unpredictable; they weave, tailgate, drive too fast or too slow, make improper turns, run red lights, and even stop at green ones. It's not only annoying; it's hazardous. Mobile-phone-related accidents include rear-ending vehicles, running off a road and crashing into trees, fences, and buildings, flipping over and having head-on collisions. Many of these accidents result in fatalities.

In October at the Melbourne Traffic Safety Summit, experts testified that "mobile phones used by drivers lead to an astonishing 100 deaths per year in our city alone." This is similar to the number killed by people drinking and driving; which is strictly outlawed and harshly enforced. For the same reasons, Melbournians should welcome these new laws that allow police to issue hefty fines and even cancel licenses for repeat offenders.

As drivers and indeed role models to the kids in the backseats of these cars, we all need to be more responsible when using mobile phones. Do we really want to be teaching the next generation of young Aussies to take risks with their own lives and the lives of others? The Craigieburn Herald has been a big supporter in the ongoing effort to reduce our road toll and this is the next battle in that war.

Opening sentence creates imagery to introduce the issue.

Contention stated clearly
Use of emotive adjectives to demonise offenders.
Collective pronoun 'we' and name of newspaper indicates that the piece is written on behalf of the editorial team and represents their view as a group.

Use of experts adds weight to the argument

Statistics coupled with loaded (connotative) language create an urgency and seriousness around the issue

Inclusive language and appeal to fear work together to encourage all readers to feel responsible

Use of metaphor suggests the road toll is an enemy to be fought against

Mobile phones can be a vital link in emergencies, but drivers need to use them wisely. As professional NASCAR racer John Andretti says, "Driving safely is your first responsibility."

As a final thought a quote from driving expert and celebrity emphasises the message about safety

Adapted From: The Write Source

<http://www.thewritesource.com/studentmodels/ws2k-phoneed.htm>