

# Mobile Phone Safety



Mobile phones are a great way for children and teenagers to stay in touch with their parents, family and friends and provide access to fun and functional resources like games, the internet, music, apps and more from anywhere at any time.

Many young people would never be without their mobile phone, and a mobile phone provides you with immediate access to your children. However, the fact that they are 24/7 and you can't always be there to supervise means there are potential risks. These can include high or unexpected bill costs, cyberbullying, sexting, broadcasting their location to unintended others through 'checking in' and access to inappropriate material.

## WHAT CAN I DO?

- + If you think your child needs a mobile phone, consider purchasing a phone that is not internet enabled. Smartphones come with features you may not yet want your child to have such as unsupervised internet access, a camera, and a wide variety of online games and apps.
- + Stay involved with your child's use of their mobile phone. If you don't have a good understanding of how their phone works and what they use it for, ask them to show you.
- + Help your child to understand that they should treat their phone like a wallet, and that every text message, phone call or download costs money.
- + Let your child know that it's ok to tell you if they come across something that worries them, and that their phone won't be taken off them if they report something to you.
- + Investigate phone plans and pre-paid contracts. Decide what your child needs from their mobile phone so you are well-educated on options before you approach a provider.
- + Check automatic download settings and in-app purchase settings on your child's mobile phone, as these can incur extra costs or use up credit quickly.
- + Consider keeping credit card details away from your children so music and apps cannot be purchased without your knowledge. If you have your credit card details stored on an online account, you may choose to keep the password to this account private.