



Safety tips for mobile phone users

The ABA has released *How to be Phone Smart*, a brochure with safety information for young people about the use of mobile phones.

'Young people love mobile phones,' said Ms Jane Marquard, ABA Member. 'With the increased take up of mobile phones by younger users, and the wider range of applications accessible through these devices, the brochure provides timely advice on how potential risks can be minimized.'

Mobile phones are no longer just a way to make voice calls when you're out and about. With 2.5G and 3G mobiles, you can now send text messages

via SMS (short message service); pictures, sounds and video via MMS (multi-media messaging); as well as access email, IM (Instant Messaging), chatrooms, and surf the Net. Many handsets include cameras, voice/music recording capabilities, and facilities for location-tracking.

The 'always on' nature of mobile services means that the risk to kids is 'ever present'. And since parents are limited in how directly they can supervise their kids' use of these devices, it is more important than ever for them to teach their kids how to protect themselves. Risks such as bullying, harassment, spam, and people making inappropriate contact, as well as the possibility of kids accessing unsuitable content, can happen anywhere, at any time, and kids need to be prepared.

The brochure is the latest in the ABA's series of 'Cybersmart Kids' safety resources. These resources help parents teach their children how to use the Internet and mobile phones safely. They include a brochure series, as well as the ABA's web site for families: <http://www.cybersmartkids.com.au>

The ABA also operates a Hotline, where members of the public can report, for investigation, offensive Internet material accessed through

computers, personal digital assistants and mobile phones. Complaints about such content can be made to <http://www.aba.gov.au/internet/complaints/complaints.htm>

The Cybersmart brochure *How to be Phone Smart* is available

on the ABA website: <http://www.aba.gov.au/internet/education/index.htm>

Alternatively you can order printed copies from the ABA by phoning 02 9334 7700 or 1800 226 667, or by sending an email to: online@aba.gov.au



The key messages for kids are:

- Make sure you know who you are talking to.
- Don't meet someone on your own.
- Stay aware of what's going on around you and guard your privacy.
- Tell an adult if you receive nasty or bullying messages.

Parents and carers need to ask themselves: 'Do we know who our children are talking to?'