

Cell Phone Smart

A public awareness campaign
to promote cell phone safety
among youth

Teaching Kids to Be Cell Phone Smart

For kids getting their first cell phone, the possibilities are endless.

- Over half of kids say they use cell phones for text messaging, and almost half use their cell phones to play games and take pictures.¹
- 58% of 12-year olds now own a cell phone; compared to 18% in 2004.²

Used appropriately, a cell phone keeps kids in touch with the people they care about, but used in the wrong way, it can be a distraction or even a hazard, so teaching kids smart & safe cell phone use is of the utmost importance.

Beginning a discussion about cell phone use early on builds good habits kids will carry into their teenage years. Teenagers send and receive over 3,000 text messages per month³. It is important to ensure that kids know not to include the following in text messaging -- personal information or mean or inappropriate comments. They should also not use texting as a replacement to engage in conversation with a person – this becomes even more important as kids get older.

The following messages and materials have been developed to build a framework for kids around smart and safe cell phone use, and are a great place to start a conversation with your kids about cell phones.

Be Aware, Show You Care

Being present and staying focused on one activity at a time can help keep you safe.

Be Nice, Think Twice

Be safe, be nice and think twice before you hit send!

A Time & Place to Show Your Face

If you have something important to say, please do it in person.

These messages have been integrated into a number of PSAs and materials, which are available for parents, teachers and community leaders to help raise the issue of cell phone safety. Materials available include a Radio PSA, Posters, Brochures, Fact Sheets and Movie Theater ads, as well as sample lesson plans and curriculum guides.

These materials can be used in a number of different ways. Share these materials with your local PTA; hang the poster on your refrigerator, and discuss healthy cell phone use habits as a family around the dinner table, or play the Radio PSA for your class to begin generating a discussion. For more information or to download activities and other materials, visit www.cellphonesmart.org.

¹ MRI American Kids Study, 2009

² Teens and Mobile Phones, 2010

³ U.S. Teen Mobile Report, 2010

