

MOBILE PHONE

Safety for Parents



Family Orbit



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Introduction

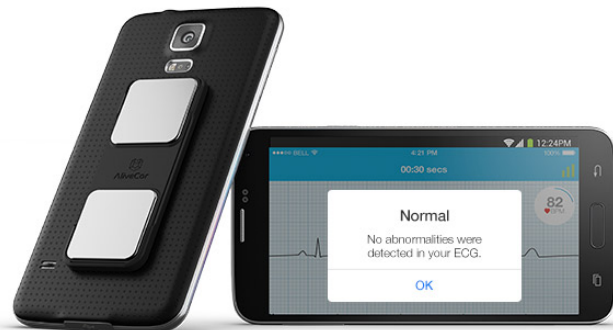


Smartphones are trending. In fact, these devices are going viral, finding their way into the hands of almost every person on the planet. Thanks to their endless benefits and power-packed features which help bring the world into your hands, from communication to gaming, business to education, the latest improvements and innovations in mobile phones have rebooted everyone's life.



The Power of Smartphones

The introduction of smartphones has created a whole new world of endless possibilities. From work to play, learning to socializing, smartphones have further opened up new horizons for users with diverse needs. While the traditional cell phone allowed taking pictures, the latest handsets also give you the facility to share your pictures using various apps. In the same way, there are scores of exciting features in the newest mobile phones that have made these devices essential for all.



Packed with hundreds of thousands of applications helping you to do homework, conduct business, to track flights, make friends, share info, play, stay fit, read books, and do much more, cell phones are the must-have technology of our time. Just as with adults, they have become an essential device for young kids and for teenagers as well.

Young Mobile Phone Users

The use of mobile phones is not limited to any age or section of society. In fact, these gadgets are used by everyone, regardless of age and other factors. Other than adults, teenagers and young kids also form a big chunk of cell phone users.



Over three quarters of U.S. teens and a growing number of younger children are using these devices for various purposes.

**Smartphones and
Your Family**



Smartphones are an essential asset for the entire family. They help parents ensure the safety of children and be able to communicate with them no matter where they are. Not only this, they may even help parents know the speed at which their teen is driving!

Although most people use their phones safely, when these devices are used by children, there is the possibility that they may not handle them so responsibly. That is



why it's natural for parents to worry about how their children are using such advanced and powerful gadgets. Just as with any other device, mobile phones come with certain risks. But that does not mean children should remain deprived of the benefits of these fantastic devices.

What to Expect From This Guide

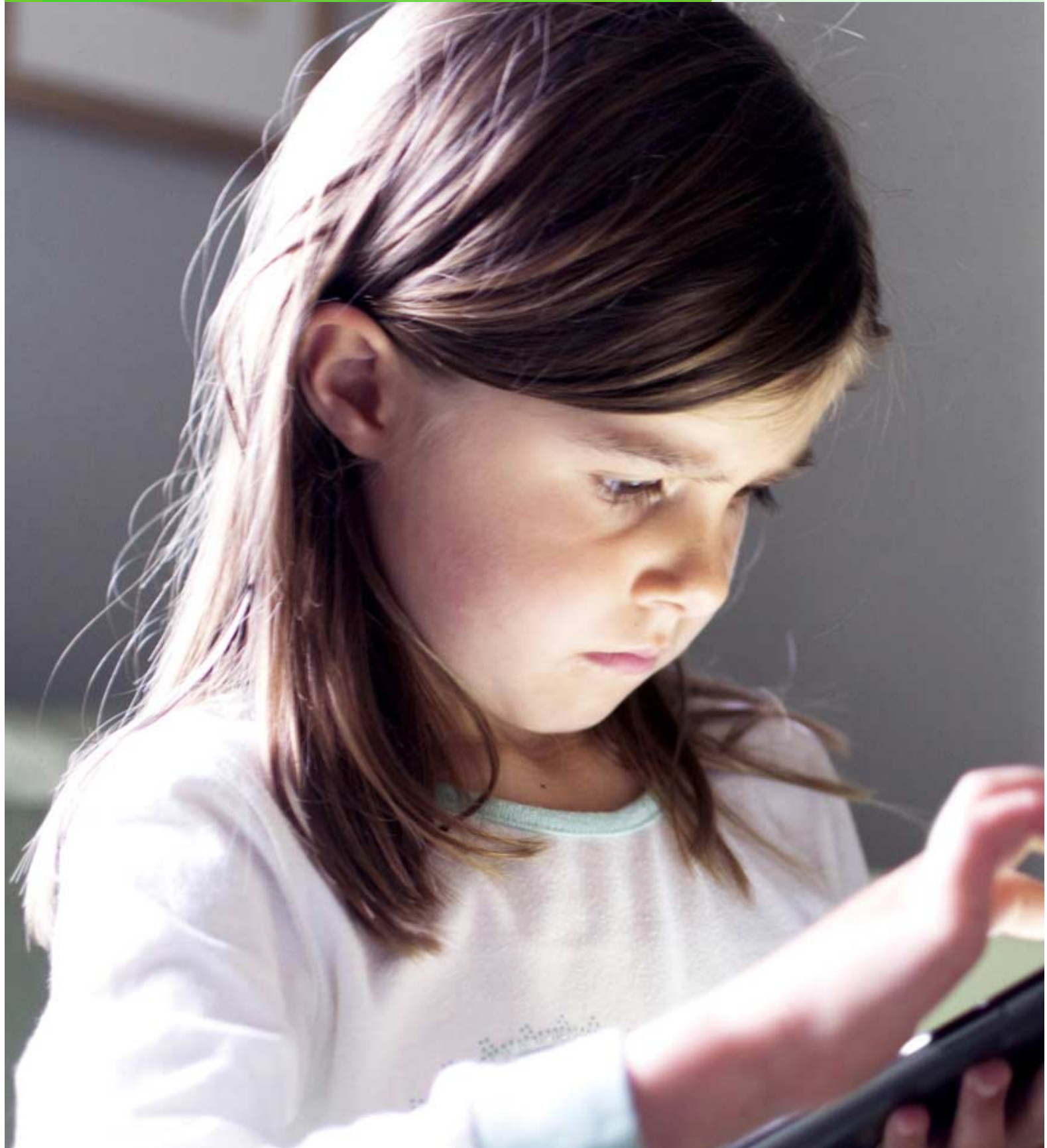
“Mobile Phone Safety for Parents” is a complete guide that can help you get to know and understand ways in which your teenager and other children may potentially use or abuse their cell phone.

This guide will not only explore the features and benefits of smartphones but also provide you with safety tips, which will allow you to monitor your child and help them to make the most of their device. You will learn:

- ✓ If your child is ready to have a cell phone or not
- ✓ What you need to do when you get your child his/her first cell phone
- ✓ How to find out and manage bad phone behavior
- ✓ How to help them use their device with responsibility
- ✓ How to teach cell phone care to your young one
- ✓ Useful safety apps that can help your child use their phone safely and that will also give you the authority to monitor their behavior as well.



Is Your Child Ready
for a Mobile Phone?



Many parents wrestle with the issue of mobile phone use for kids. What's the right age for your child to have a smartphone? Well, this is a tricky question as there is NO fixed age for using a cell phone. Then how do you determine whether you should give one to your son or daughter or not? There are a number of factors that you need to take into consideration before you make up your mind.



Here are few questions that you need to ask yourself before you hand over a smartphone to your child:

- Do they really need a mobile phone?
- How independent are they?
- Do they need a mobile phone for safety reasons or social ones?
- How responsible are they?
- Can I trust them not to text during class and disturb others?

Once you have answers to all these questions, you will have an idea whether your child is prepared to handle a mobile phone or not.

Moreover, you will also have to consider if he or she is....

- ❖ Able to understand the cost of phone and the usage of the internet
- ❖ Willing not to share his/her location, except only with close contacts
- ❖ Ready to take care of a smartphone
- ❖ Prepared to use the phone sensibly without sacrificing their school work

Just remember when you give your child a cell phone that you are giving them a powerful communications and production tool. They will be able to create images, text,



and videos that can be shared not only with their friends but also with the whole world, if uploaded to websites. They will also be able to share their location with any person and download whatever they want. So think about all these issues, in order to have a clear idea as to whether it is the right time to

give your child a smartphone or not. Take your time and think carefully, as making a well-informed decision will ensure the safety of your entire family.

Things to Do When You Get Your Child a Mobile Device



So, you've made up your mind to get a mobile phone for your child. With a great phone in your hand, you will be a proud mom or dad upon giving them their first phone. But wait. Before you actually surprise your darling, there are few things that you need to do so that they can enjoy their new phone without any potential problems.

Set a password. The very first thing to do when you get their phone is to set a password. It will help you defend your child's personal information from thieves and snoopers. Furthermore, remember to set the phone to automatically lock after 3 minutes.



Learn the school rules. You need to know the phone policy at your child's school. Visit the school or school district website in order to check their limitations and rules for using a phone on school grounds and in school time.

Hold a family meeting. Before your child holds the phone in their hand and starts tapping or swiping through a world of possibilities, you need to hold a family meeting. You should discuss your most critical terms of agreement for the mobile phone.

Add important contacts. You need to add all necessary important people into the phone's contact list before your child begins to use it. Adding parents, grandparents, siblings, sitters and emergency contacts can help.

Download a security app. Another essential thing to do is to download a security app for your child's smartphone that will automatically protect them from downloading bad apps and visiting unsafe websites.

Guide them through all the apps. As you and your child download their first apps, make sure you help them through this process so that you get to see all of the apps that they are interested in, and so that they can have your approval. There is no good reason to download apps with low ratings as they are not worthwhile. Also, make sure you let your child know how to download apps from trusted sources, such as Google Play and the Apple Store.



Spotting and Handling Bad Phone Behavior



Giving a phone to your child is not in itself the issue. The real challenge is to make sure that they use the phone appropriately, otherwise the entire objective of them having a phone will go waste. While it is important to let kids have access to information and communication, you cannot ignore the fact that they must be on guard against various pitfalls such as over-usage or unsuitable usage. Here we have some suggestions for smartphone-savvy parents, to help them ensure that their children use mobile phones in the best possible manner.



- ✚ **Keep an eye on the bill.** There are various mobile service

providers that allow you to view your bills on the web. Other than seeing the bills for the numbers dialed, you also need to see any billable apps, ringtones, etc.

- ✚ **Set alerts.** This is another important thing to do in order to find out and make sure that your child continues to use the cell phone without any problem. When you actually purchase the device, you can work with the service provider to customize alerts for the phone. For example, you can set alerts indicating to you when a child's phone has exceeded a certain amount of texts or voice minutes, downloads, purchases etc.

- ✚ **Talk.** You must spend some time with your child, engaging in discussion with them to ensure they know why they have got a mobile phone, how they are using it, if they are having any problems discussing other important things happening in their lives. In case you suspect or detect that they are violating any rule you have

set, discuss it without any delay so that the problem can be addressed immediately.

✚ **Warn about the consequences beforehand.** Before you actually get to penalize your child for any bad mobile phone behavior, you need to tell them beforehand what the consequences will be in case they cross the line. Tell your child clearly what will happen if they violate the phone rules you have established so that they don't perceive you as a bad parent if you have to confiscate or shut down their smartphone as a result of their actions.



Remember that the smartphone is for the benefit of your child and if it seems to be doing more harm than good to them, their phone use should be discontinued. Keeping an eye on bad phone behavior is extremely important for your child as well for the entire family in order to avoid any situation that you or your child may regret later. Being vigilant is the key, so make sure you act like a vigilant parent for the good of the entire family.

Build Responsibility with Mobile Phones



Your children deserve mobile phones just like any other person so that they may use them as a means of communication, and for learning as well as entertainment. BUT as kids will be kids after all and are not likely to be as responsible as adults, you need to help your child during their early years so that they remain safe from any potential issues associated with smartphone uses.

Building responsibility and guiding your child in various important things regarding their first mobile phone can greatly help you and them to make the most of their device. Here are some simple rules that will help you make your child more efficient and responsible mobile phone user:

Safety issues. Help your child learn the safety rules. You need to teach them how to handle emergencies. Tell them how they can get in touch with you in a problem situation by calling or texting you. Also, make sure they know how to contact 9-1-1 in an emergency.

Not sharing inappropriate content. Make sure you inform your child not to share inappropriate pictures or videos with others. They must not also send out any threatening or rude text or voice messages. If they receive any inappropriate content, they must inform you immediately so that you may take appropriate action.

Surfing and downloading. No matter how smart your child is, there is always the possibility that they may not know which sites are safe to visit and which apps should be avoided. So advise your child to stay away from places that they are not familiar with and



always try to check new sites and apps with them before they visit or download.

Mobile use and driving. Most teenagers may be tempted to use their mobile phones while they are driving, which is extremely dangerous. If your child drives too, make sure you inform them very clearly of the consequences of using a mobile phone while driving.

Online privacy. One of the most essential things to teach your child before giving them a smartphone is that they need to be very careful about online privacy. They must not post personal information to sites or answer any questions giving out their personal info. Moreover, tell them that they should not post or forward photos of other people without their permission.

Stranger danger. Make sure you inform your children that in case they get any data from strangers or any call from someone that they don't know, they must not respond and should inform you immediately.

Mobile phone allowances. Kids with phones spend an average of 73 minutes a day texting. While this method of communication does give your child the benefit of convenient communications, it also provides a window for wasting time and money and indulging in undesirable communication. If self-control becomes an issue, take the phone away so that they do not feel the temptation to use the phone endlessly.

Smartphone Care



Other than making sure that your child learns how to use their mobile phone safely, you must also tell them how to care for it. If you don't, they may end up losing their phone somewhere, or else the poor handset may actually lose its life by drowning in the sink in the kitchen or bathroom! A few simple instructions can go a long way:

✚ Make sure you inform your child that they must not let their smartphone drop. They must not throw them in rage either. In such a scenario, the screen may get cracked which could be disastrous. Other than emphasizing to them how to care for their smartphone and save it from falling, you need to get them a case for the phone as well. Buy a good quality case so that the screen as well as the rest of the phone body remains safe.



✚ If their cell phone runs out of battery power when they are not at home, it can be a serious issue. Even the best smartphones run out of juice so you need to teach your child how they can save power. Turning on the power-saving mode, setting the

screen brightness at low, and turning off Bluetooth and WiFi are some of the important things that your child must know how to do to save the power of their phone.

✚ It is essential that you instruct your child to be watchful against theft or from losing their phone. Though losing a cell phone is quite common, it is important for them to be careful so that they can



minimize the chances of this happening. Placing the phone in a particular pocket of their bag or jeans where they are always aware of its presence can help them ensure the safety of their phone, rather than having to carry it by hand the whole time. Also, tell them that they should keep the phone in their sight at all times.

Safety & Security Apps



In addition to counseling and guiding your child about their mobile phone usage, you must also use technology tools in order to ensure that they remain safe from all kinds of potential problems related to cell phones. Fortunately, there are a number of parental controls as well as safety and security apps that can help you in this regard.

Any security app that you wish to use should include protection against bad apps, phishing scams, data loss, privacy violations, as well as phone loss. Getting these apps will also help you keep an eye on your young ones and make sure they are safe at all times.



Security Apps

As a parent you can consider getting the following apps that can help your children continue not just to use their cell phones safely but also to ensure their own personal safety.

Family Orbit® <http://www.familyorbit.com>

Family Orbit® allows you to keep your family connected and secure. It allows you to track where your kids are and you can also limit their access to the device. In fact, you can let them access only specific features if you want, basic ones such as calling you and messaging. It's a great tool that helps you set the safe/unsafe zones for your children and you will immediately get notified when your child is out of place.

PhoneSheriff <http://www.phonesheriff.com>

PhoneSheriff is a great app if you want to make sure that you increase phone security. Aside from being able to access very good parental controls and filters, the app also integrates some other nice features. This includes thief alert, data backup, missing device detection and predictive security.

The Final Word

Your children are your most precious asset. Setting mobile phone safety rules, instructing and guiding your children about the responsible use of mobile phones and taking all necessary precautions is an indispensable part of family life. It will ensure the safety of your children and give them a chance to use smartphones just the way they deserve.