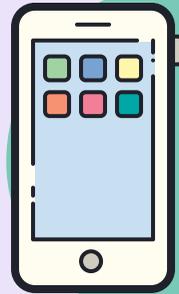


MOBILE PHONES

There is no rule or legislation about what age a child can own their first mobile phone but it is a very important decision for any family. Before purchasing one it is important to consider some questions such as:

- Does your child really need a mobile phone right now?
- What does your child need the mobile phone for?
- Is your child asking for it because they need it or because their friends have one?
- Do you know how to set parental controls and limits on the phone you might be buying?
- Is your child mature enough to have and be responsible for a mobile phone?



**53% OF 7
YEAR OLDS
HAVE THEIR
OWN MOBILE**

Remember, once your child has a phone it is highly likely they will always have one so it's important you get it at a time when it is right for your family and, more importantly, for your child and their development. For more information about getting your child a phone, visit the [Safer Internet website](#).

WHEN A PHONE IS USEFUL

It's important you have a clear understanding of how your child will use the phone and how it will benefit your family. This is often primarily about staying in touch when they travel to school. But, of course, smartphones offer other benefits too, from researching homework, accessing favourite programmes, taking pictures and videos, playing games, as well as (particularly important at the moment) keeping up with friends.



WHAT ARE THE RISKS TO HAVING A PHONE?

Like any piece of technology, phones have both benefits and risks. Many of the risks depend on how a phone is being used. Here are some key concerns people have about children using phones in particular:

- Excessive screen time
- Spending too much money
- Accessing inappropriate content
- Over-sharing personal information such as full name, location or images
- Behaving inappropriately or unkindly online
- Cyberbullying and harassment from friends or strangers
- Unwanted or inappropriate contact from friends or strangers

