

# Sharing good practice

1/9/07  
Hello



*Welcome to our new electronic magazine.*

*Sharing Good Practice is the weekly magazine for primary teachers from ictopus (ICT online primary user support). It is available, free to all, by signing up for it on our website [www.ictopus.org.uk](http://www.ictopus.org.uk). Each edition of the magazine will have 6 pages and will comprise case-study articles, top tips for using ICT effectively in primary education, website recommendations and a variety of teaching plans and other resources. It will be available in a printable format that could be displayed on a staff notice board or coffee table, slotted into individual staff pigeonholes and stored in a ring binder for future reference. It is proposed to have a coherent theme for each edition (although this introductory issue is something of a rag-bag) and the overall focus is to be on disseminating good practice.*

*The focus of each edition will be an article or articles contributed by readers. If you feel that you could make a contribution please contact me, Heather Govier, at [contact@ictopus.org.uk](mailto:contact@ictopus.org.uk) (we pay a small £50 thank-you fee for each piece published).*

## Your Children and their Mobiles

Robert Hart, Research Director, Intuitive Media



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Most adults accept mobile phones as a liberating technology, but find quirky ringtones and loud train conversations intrusive. Young children, however, seem to embrace them with unqualified enthusiasm.

We were interested in how the children in our Protected Online Learning Communities used their phones, particularly with an eye on their educational and social potential, so we asked a sample of 1477 of the children in [SuperClubsPLUS.com](http://SuperClubsPLUS.com) and [GoldStarCafe.net](http://GoldStarCafe.net) about their use of mobile phones. The age range of the sample was 6 to 13 years, with the largest proportion (79%) of children between 10-13 years old (Year Groups 5, 6 and 7). Almost two-thirds of the sample were girls.

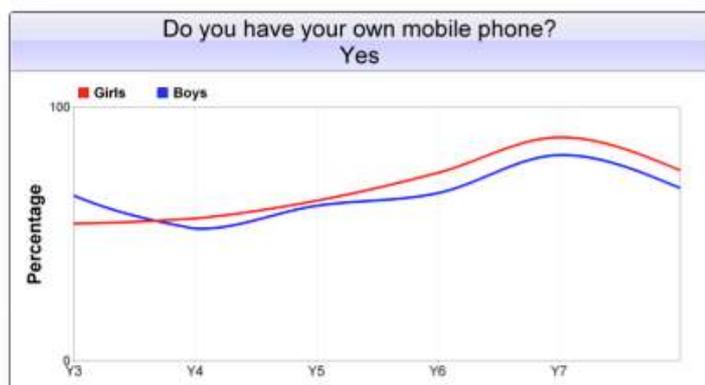
### *Ownership*

We know little about children's ownership of mobile phones in the UK, and what we think we know goes quickly out of date as more children take them up, at a younger age, and do more and more with them. We now expect to see teenagers with their

phones, but at what age do younger children start to join the mobile revolution?

We found that a large majority (72%) of the children own a mobile - an increase of 11% in 5 months since our last similar survey in SuperClubsPLUS.

- 72% of children have their own mobile phone.
- 53% of 8 to 9 year olds have a mobile phone.
- 43% say they pay their own mobile phone bills.



Year Group	Age (years)	Ownership
Year 8	12–13	72%
Year 7	11–12	85%
Year 6	10–11	71%
Year 5	9–10	63%
Year 4	8–9	53%

## Phoning

How autonomous are children in their use of mobile phones, for example, do parents or children have control of their spending on calls? Who do they call - can they call anyone they want to? Where and when do they use their mobiles most - at home, in the evenings or at weekends? Do they use them at school?

Most children call their friends and family in the evenings and at weekends, mostly in private and unsupervised. Very few use them at school.

- 52% call their parents.
- 55% call their friends.
- Only 7% say they use their mobile at school.
- 52% use their phones mostly in private without supervision.

## Other uses

Making calls is the simplest thing to do on modern phones, but new functions are constantly appearing. What do children do with their phones - texting, taking pictures, making videos, sending stuff to friends?

Do they download ringtones, music, pictures and videos? If so where from? Do they pay for them? Do they share them with friends? Do they use their phones to go on the Internet - for research or social networking? If so, there are tremendous possibilities for learning on the move. If not - why not?

No one who has sat on a bus will be surprised that 21% of children say they like to play music out loud on their mobiles in public places. Interestingly 29% say they share music (illegally!) by bluetooth – a finding that has shocked the music industry.

- 80% use MP3 players, mobile phones or iPods to listen to music on the move.
- 21% play music out loud in public places.
- 43% take videos, and another 45% want to.
- 29% of the children say they use the Internet on their mobile phones at least once a month.
- 29% already share music with friends via Bluetooth and 45% want to.



- 25% download ring tones, music, games and pictures.
- 44% want to download games.
- 22% send emails using their mobile phones.
- 18% buy things for their phones.
- Most children who watch videos on mobiles watch those they have made themselves.

Children's demand for mobile games outstrips adults and there are indications for the future of connected multi-player gaming, with 39% of children playing mobile games with friends and 39% who want to.

## Safety

We are increasing aware of the dangers of unprotected mobile communications, with plenty of evidence of abuse, such as:

- commercial exploitation by unscrupulous content providers who lock users into download scams
- bullying - often by school mates and sometimes to extremes, leading to severe distress
- invasion of privacy and reputation assault, for example, the practice of taking pictures under the school toilet door and circulating them, which has led in some cases to children suffering kidney problems because they aren't use the school toilets
- unwanted sexual harassment and grooming, which has led to meetings between children and predators and sexual attack.

How do the dangers of mobile communications impact on children? Do children get bad messages or calls? Do they come across unsuitable or upsetting content?

We found a large minority of the children had received "bad messages". Most worrying were the children who had calls or texts involving flirting or grooming and some with invitations to meet strangers.

- 23% of girls and 16% of boys have received bad messages on their mobile phones. The messages ranged from unwanted advertising to insults from friends, bullying, rude messages and images, to scary and threatening calls.

Here's what a few of them said:

- "people that i dont no are sending me dirty picture and making rude comments"
- "i got a message saying a link for a nude website so i had to change my number"
- "once i got a surprisingly rude text from my best friend since then i m not allowed to text chat"
- "i got told someone was going to kill me if i didnt give them 10 000 so i went to my parents and track the people down my calling the police"
- "i used to get random calls so i told my parents and they sorted it out"
- "someone sent me a dirty joke thinking i was my mum because i got my mums old simcard lol"

Are parents aware of the dangers. Do they supervise children's calls? Do they give children advice or rules for how to stay safe?

89% of children said their parents give them some rules about using their mobile phones, mostly related to:

- Wasting money - "only allowed to spend £1 a week so i dont have to waist creadet or if some think happens i dont have enoth creadet to phone my parents"

**Editor's note**  
lol is text shorthand for 'laugh out loud' – it signifies a laugh or a joke.



- Behaving responsibly - "dont say rude messeges to peopel dont use it too much or you will get bad ears"
- Not talking to strangers - "not to text strangers and use comon sense do not answer the phone to somone who is not in my phone book"

## *The Future*

Finally, we asked children what kinds of phone they want in the future and what they would like to do with their phones that they can't do now.

We found that children want more robust and versatile mobile phone hardware:

- *"drop it and it wont break e.t.c"*
- *"I wish you could get tiny little C.D's, D.v.d disks and C.D roms that fit into your phone."*

Children want rich multimedia capabilities and online communications on their mobiles and they want it all for free:

- "be able to download text and call without costing"
- "Have internet that dosen't cost money!"
- "I think I'd wish the Internet was free on your phones and you could play NintendoDS games on them I would LOVE that! I wish I could actually get a phone and also have loads of fun games, that are in colour!"

Children want more versatile software and access to the full capabilities of the Internet:

- "Be able to have like a Skype."
- "bluetooth on every phone and camera above screen"
- "go on proper internet that you have on computer. So that you could go on superclubsplus."
- "have video convos, send 3d stuff to each other"
- "Play muliti-player games through text."

There is no shortage of new ideas including many involving matter transfer.

- "you could tell it a type of food and it would appear infront of yuo ready to eat! "
- "Put it to your ear as is you are talking to someone, then say something you want and it will appear! For example: say chocolate and it will appear right in front of you! :) yum... put more money on "

## *Summary*

Most of the children surveyed say they own mobile phones including over half of 8 year olds. They use them mainly at home - evenings and weekends to call parents and friends. Only a few use them at school. A large minority pay their own phone bills. Children like to share music with their friends and play music on the move. They spend money downloading ringtones and other content. Currently a minority access the Internet on their phones. Children are aware of the dangers and around a quarter have received bad messages. Parents' rules relate to using phone credits wisely, not making prank calls, giving our private information or talking to strangers.

Love them or hate them, we can't ignore them. Every year we are finding mobile phones are becoming more embedded in society and we can expect more children to use them in ever more creative ways.



## Source

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## Author Notes

Robert Hart is Director of Research, Intuitive Media Research Services



## At home with CCTV



Jake, aged 5, has a 'Smartview' closed-circuit television (CCTV) at home, courtesy of the Communication Aids Project (CAP). When he started school, his LEA provided a CCTV in the classroom as a means of magnifying text and images and the teacher of visually impaired pupils who supports Jake suggested they apply for extra equipment for home use.

This has made a tremendous difference to his reading progress. "We've made the study a place for reading in our house," says his Dad. "Jake enjoys the Oxford Reading Tree scheme they use at school and he has large-print versions of the readers but obviously he wants to read other books as well. We use the CCTV for bedtime stories and family time reading which he loves. *Hairy Maclary* is one of his favourites. Sometimes we realise we haven't seen him for a while and he has scurried upstairs to the study to use the CCTV."

Jake is also finding all sorts of novel uses for his kit. "He takes his toy cars upstairs and uses the CCTV as a magnifier," says his Dad. "The other day I walked in to find him examining the suspension on a toy motorbike!" Jake seems to have a mechanical bent: "He worked out all the dials and controls on his CCTV far quicker than we did".



Jake is totally at home with his CCTV: "I'm very pleased with my CCTV because I don't have to use my magnifier any more. The one at home is a bit different from the one at school because it has a screen that turns round and round. The children at school think the CCTV is a computer and my teacher lets them use it to make stuff bigger."

In fact, the school has been very sensitive to the fact that the CCTV might mark Jake out as being 'different', so they have adapted teaching methods to incorporate the CCTV in class work. Now all the children know what it is and what it does so it is not 'special' any more.

### Editor's Note

*This piece was first published as part of the report on The Communication Aids Project (CAP). This began on 1st April, 2002 and was managed by Becta on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). The aim of the project was to further the DfES Inclusion agenda by helping schools and LAs develop the awareness and skills of their personnel, with regard to communication difficulties. CAP had a finite lifespan and ran until 31st March,*



2006. However, the CAP project has left behind a legacy of skilled personnel across the regions of England who continue providing support for pupils with communication difficulties in accessing the curriculum. The CAP project also leaves a number of inspirational young people to whom technology makes a huge difference on a daily basis. Further details can be found at: <http://cap.becta.org.uk/index.php>

SmartView video magnifiers can be purchased from:

**HumanWare**

Russell Smith House, 2 Bullmat Business Centre, Northampton Rd, Rushden, Northamptonshire NN10 6AR

Tel: +44 1933 415 800

Fax: +44 1933 411 209

Email [eu.info@humanware.com](mailto:eu.info@humanware.com)

## Crudités Anyone?

Janice Staines



Are you looking for inspiration for an art, creative writing lesson or even home economics? If so, you might like to check out this fabulous PowerPoint presentation where the stars are created entirely out of fruit and vegetables - it ties in nicely with the Government Healthy Eating agenda too!

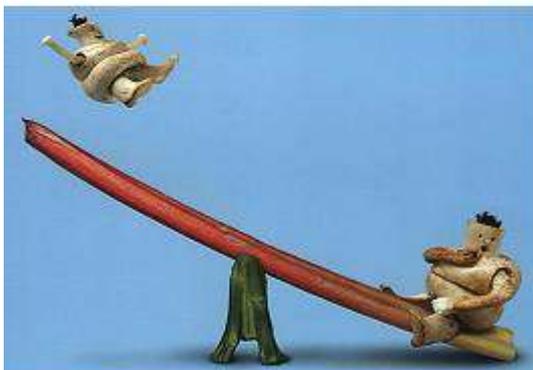
The first challenge might be to get your class to identify which fruit and vegetables have been used to create these masterpieces. The second, to get them to use their imaginations and create some of their own.

Add a digital camera to the mix and you could soon be showing your own vegetable art slideshows in an assembly or at a parents' evening.

If you're lucky enough to have access to a digital video camera you could even get your class to storyboard and shoot a short stop frame video animation based around the vegetable characters... It worked for Aardman Animations after all.

The PowerPoint slideshow can be downloaded from:

<http://www.esnips.com/doc/56cc9abd-0e6a-4203-806e-cf122ddd9077/VegetableArt>



### Author Notes

Janice is Schools and Early Years Adviser at Becta where she is currently working on e-maturity of the learner and personalised learning.

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