



Parents to track kids on mobiles

IT'S the ultimate modern accessory for children and teenagers, offering a sense of freedom and independence.

But now the mobile phone is set to become a surveillance device allowing parents to pinpoint their children's whereabouts.

Parents will soon be able to avail of a new service from a Dublin security firm which will allow them to track their child's movements through mobile phones.

Top Security is planning to launch the service early next month.

SURVEYING

The company has already been surveying parents to gauge how often they ring their children to check their whereabouts. They said the service would offer parents "peace of mind in knowing where their children are without bothering them with telephone calls".

Parents who avail of the service can use a password to access a website. This will allow them to find their child's phone on a map, pinpointing it to within metres of the phone's location.

Details of the exact service are as yet unclear, and the company has declined to offer extensive information until the official launch next month.

In order to use the Toplocate surveillance service, parents would be obliged to inform their children that they were being monitored.

Children will also receive



PHONES: Used for surveillance

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regular text messages from the company informing them that their phone is part of the location service for parents.

However, the phone owner will not know when or how often their location is tracked on the internet.

This latest service is simply a commercial alternative to phone surveillance which is often used by gardai to locate suspects in criminal cases.

The phones are tracked by telecommunications base stations as soon as they are switched on.

There are now more phones than people in Ireland, with several people owning multiple handsets. In the 12 to 18-year-old age group, over 90pc own mobile phones.