

# Why Parents Need to Stop Playing Dumb When it Comes to Smartphones

By Diane K. Danielson

It seems every week now there are teens being suspended from school and even arrested for sending offensive texts and posting inappropriate items on Facebook (and Twitter). I expect this is just the beginning. Why? Because almost every child from age 10-18 is now going to school, attending parties, and literally sleeping with an Internet-connected mini-computer that is always on and has all the latest apps including a camera.

We might call it a phone, but when was the last time your kid actually used that smartphone you gave them to talk to someone? The main uses are texting, Facebooking, Tweeting, videotaping and sharing all sorts of things that a generation ago we wouldn't share with anyone other than our diary or our best friend ... and most the time that didn't work out so well on the privacy end either.

More importantly, when I say "smartphone" I'm including iTouches. Why? Because all it takes is a texting or Skype app to turn an iTouch into an iPhone.

How do smartphones contribute to this recent increase in teenage stupidity?

1. Smartphones are mini-computers. They connect to the Internet. This means that your child can access everything you might normally block or supervise on your home computer.

2. Smartphones encourage impulsivity. We've all seen the ads on TV. Just snap a photo and upload it to Facebook, Twitter or YouTube within seconds. There's no heading home, booting up the computer, downloading pictures from a camera and having the time to sober up (literally, in

some cases) so that one might consider the consequences.

3. Smartphones are easily accessed by others. Kids misplace things. Who knows what other kids might do with that smartphone if they found it? Even if they don't lose it, does your child have a friend who might think it's funny to post something inappropriate or offensive from your child's phone? Or, perhaps your child impulsively took a nude photo of him or herself to send to a boy or girlfriend? (Yes. They do this. Why? I'm not sure. You'd have to ask Brett Favre about that.) Yet, even if they didn't intend to share that photo, what might that questionable "friend" with access to the phone do in an impulsive moment?

4. Smartphones are with your kids in the car. Despite the focus on the dangers of texting while driving, we now have a smartphone that pings whenever someone posts an update. In November 2009, the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project found that one in four (26%) of American teens of driving age say they have texted while driving, and half (48%) of all teens ages 12 to 17 say they've been a passenger while a driver has texted behind the wheel. That was in a survey from a world before smartphones ruled and Facebook and Twitter were constantly beckoning.

5. Smartphones are with your kids 24/7. This means less sleep as they text, Facebook and Tweet throughout the night. As a result, they are not only exhausted in school, they are likely sending sleep-deprived, impulsive communications. It also means no break from the daily stress of being a teenager.

Unfortunately, smartphones both

encourage and exacerbate our children's worst instincts when it comes to impulsive behavior. This is why it is up to parents to establish parameters and rules.

Parental Tasks:

- As always, talking with your child about the consequences of inappropriate use of smartphones is the best way to prevent them from doing something stupid. Create ground rules like: no curse words or insults; no sending photos that would upset their grandmother; and no joining groups on Facebook that "hate" someone or something.

- Review your bills. Check what times your kids are sending texts. Also look for spikes in application usage.

- Enable restrictions on your child's iPhone or iTouch. Go to Settings>Restrictions. Unfortunately, these are all or nothing options like turning off the Internet or YouTube, so may not be feasible except for the youngest children. It's likely Droids have something similar.

- You can also install an app like Mobicip on your child's iTouch or iPhone, which replaces the Safari browser with a more child-friendly one and provides reports for monitoring your child's Internet-related activities.

- For monitoring texts there is My Mobile Watchdog, which you set up with your child (as opposed to Mobile Spy which you set up without your child's knowledge). Remember, you own that smartphone and your child's use of it should be a privilege that comes with restrictions, not a right.

- Take that phone, ipod, laptop, ipad, and/or xbox live away at night. We were teenagers once, so we all know that most really bad judgments are made after midnight. Enforce this night-

time technology blackout by doing the following:

- Take the xbox Live and all computers out of their rooms. Keep them in a public space.

- Set up a charging station in the kitchen or somewhere public and demand that everyone "check in" their mobile devices (smartphone, iTouch, iPad) each night or you stop paying for them. This also gives you a chance to access and do a spot-check.

The one thing that I hope you take away from this article is that you stop thinking of a smartphone, or an iTouch, as a "phone" or a "hand-held game." They are fully functional, Internet-connected computers that you are putting in your child's hands, often without any supervision and/or limitations.

Recently, we saw two 14-year olds get together for a joyride in the middle of the night resulting in a horrific crash. While we might not know exactly how this all came about, I wouldn't be surprised to find that a few after-midnight text messages enabled such stupidly impulsive behavior.

We wouldn't give the car keys to our kids without a license, yet sometimes handing them a smartphone can be just as dangerous.

*Reprinted courtesy of the Cohasset Mariner.*

*Diane K. Danielson is a new media marketing consultant who specializes in helping businesses incorporate social media into their marketing and business development plans. See <http://dkdnewmedia.com> for more information.*

**P&C Construction**  
**New Vernonia K-12 School**

**REQUEST FOR BID**  
**Bid Package Five (BP-5): Sound and Theatrical Intercom System**

**Bids Due 2:00 pm PST, July 26, 2011**

Bids for the "VERNONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT -SOUND AND THEATRICAL INTERCOM SYSTEM: BID PACKAGE FIVE (BP-5)" will be received by the Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC), P&C Construction, 2133 NW York St, Portland, OR 97210 by the time and date listed above. Faxed bids will be accepted. Questions regarding the proposal shall be in writing and directed to Kevin McCall at P&C Construction by fax (503.667.2565) or e-mail (kmccall@builtbypanc.com). Late bids will not be accepted.

The scope of work for this bid package includes, but is not limited to, Sound and Theatrical Intercom System at the new Vernonia K-12 School in Vernonia Oregon. It is anticipated that work on site will commence in September 2011 and must reach Final Completion no later than April 12th, 2012.

Beginning on July 12th, 2011, bid documents may be examined at the offices of P&C or obtained electronically by contacting Rosanna Williamson at P&C Construction (503.665-0165 or rosanna@builtbypanc.com). Bidders must ask specifically for documents titled "VERNONIA K-12 SCHOOL - ADDENDUM#13 CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS". The specific sheets that the subcontractor will be responsible for bidding are SS001, SS002, SS003, SS150C, SS151B and SS151C. The specific specification section is - 27 41 16.62 Sound and Theatrical Intercom System. The complete set of plans and specifications are available for review.

All bidders must be able to furnish payment and performance bonds covering the faithful performance of the subcontract and the payment for all obligations arising hereunder should such bonds be requested by P&C. P&C reserves

the right to reject any proposer not capable of securing said bonds.

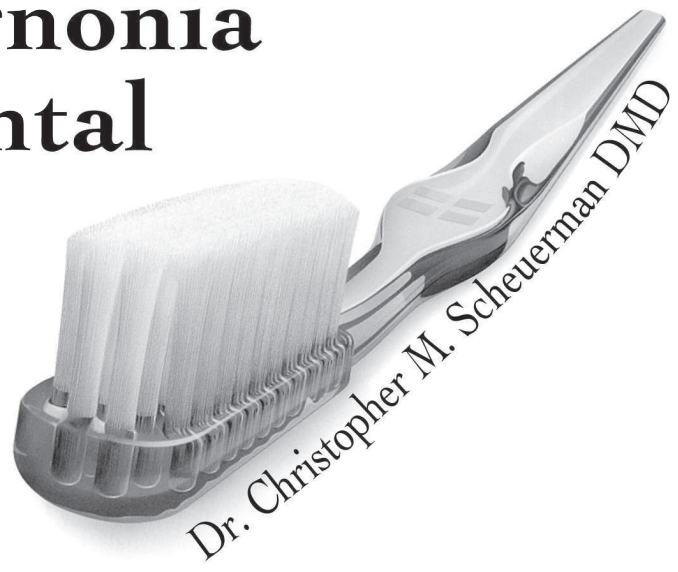
This is Davis-Bacon Job. Subcontractor will pay weekly (no exceptions) and will pay the higher labor rate between BOLI (April, 2010), or Davis-Bacon (OR100038 MOD 7 REVISED 08/27/10 OR38). Therefore, subcontractor agrees to meet all guidelines and regulations set forth and in accordance with governing authorities. NOTE: Certified payroll reports must be submitted to contractor as a condition for payment. Subcontractor is required to submit originally signed (ink signature) certified payroll. All bidders must be registered with the Construction Contractors Board and in compliance with all other licensing requirements at the time of submission of their bids.

P&C Construction, on behalf of the School District, reserves the right to: reject any and all proposals; reject any proposal not in compliance with the bidding procedures and requirements; reject for good cause any proposal that would be in the public's best interest to do so; and waive minor irregularities in any or all proposals. There will be no public opening of bids.

P&C Construction is an equal opportunity employer and is actively seeking proposals from minority, women, disadvantaged, and emerging small business enterprises.

A sample P&C subcontract is included in the bid documents. Therefore, subcontractors must clearly make note of any exceptions to the subcontract prior to bid due date and time. P&C will consider and exceptions taken to the P&C subcontract when analyzing bids and making a selection for the firm that will perform the work outlined in the bid package.

# Vernonia Dental



622 Bridge Street Vernonia, OR 97064  
phone (503) 429-0880 -- fax (503) 429-0881

**VERNONIA**

**SERVICE  
& REPAIR**

**LUBE, OIL  
& FILTER**

**WHILE YOU WAIT**

**STARTING AT  
\$29.95  
UP TO 5 QT.**

**58605 NEHALEM HWY. S.  
503/706/9409**

**VERNONIA  
PHARMACY**

*Better Service, Less Wait, Same Co-Pay*

**We take Pride in our  
Quality, Personal service**

**Come on in for your flu shot**

*Call now to Transfer Your Prescriptions!*

**503-429-0591**

Check out our website:  
[www.vernoniarx.com](http://www.vernoniarx.com)

\*ONLINE PRESCRIPTION REFILL  
\*PERSONALIZED E-MAIL NEWSLETTERS  
\*DRUG ALERTS AND INFORMATION  
\*AND MUCH MORE

Hours of Operation:  
Mon.-Fri. 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.  
Saturday 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.  
Closed Sunday