

## Media Release

# Old phones to help keep kids safe from cyberbullying

## MobileMuster and The Alannah and Madeline Foundation partner to help schools become eSmart and protect kids from cyberbullying

Australians are being urged to recycle their old and broken mobile phones to help kids learn about responsible mobile phone use and to protect them from cyberbullying at school.

From February until the end of May 2011, MobileMuster will be collecting old mobile phones, batteries, chargers and accessories, to help fund and implement The Alannah and Madeline Foundation's eSmart system in schools across Australia.

"Today's kids are digital natives; they understand how to use technology but might not necessarily understand their responsibilities in using it appropriately and safely," said Rose Read, Manager Recycling with Mobile Muster.

"MobileMuster is proud to partner with The Alannah and Madeline Foundation to help children learn how to be smart, safe and responsible users of technology," says Ms Read.

Research conducted in April 2010 by the Child Health Promotion Research Centre at Edith Cowan University in Western Australia revealed that one in 10 Australian children experience cyberbullying every few weeks.

"More children will return to school in February having received mobile phones as Christmas presents.

"It is critical that school communities are supported to assist students to use these devices effectively and to educate and protect them from cyberbullying and other cyber-risks," says Ms Read.

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation's eSmart program provides a guiding framework to help schools develop the policies, practices and procedures to promote smart, safe and responsible use of communications technology as an everyday part of school life.

eSmart also provides a system for schools to track and report how they are progressing with implementing cybersafety in their school community.

"Children and young people with mobile phones can be exposed to cyberbullying, stalking, sexually suggestive images and even identity fraud. eSmart will help students to identify when they might be at risk and know how to respond," says Dr Judith Slocombe, CEO of The Alannah and Madeline Foundation.

Old and broken mobile phones and accessories collected by MobileMuster for recycling between 1 February and 31 May 2011, and will also help to achieve significant environmental outcomes.

"There are over 16 million old and broken phones in Australia that are no longer used. Recycling them with MobileMuster will help to ensure that old phones don't end up as

landfill and will see that 90 per cent of the materials in the phones are re-used,” says Ms Read.

The material recovered from the recycled mobiles will be used to make stainless steel items, plastic fence posts, jewellery and even new batteries.

“Mobile phones are a great way for children to stay in touch with their parents and their peers. Recycling old mobile phones with MobileMuster will help to ensure that children and young adults can use these mobile phones responsibly and enjoy them,” says Ms Read.

**‘Old phones, safe kids’ will run from 1 February until 31 May 2011.**

**For every 2 kg of mobile phones and accessories handed in for recycling MobileMuster will donate a \$1 towards The Alannah and Madeline Foundation’s eSmart system. MobileMuster will donate up to \$20,000.**

**Recycling an old mobile phone is free and easy, simply:**

1. Hand ‘em in at your mobile phone retailer / MobileMuster local collection point - to find your nearest one go to [www.mobilemuster.com.au](http://www.mobilemuster.com.au) or call 1300 730 070  
or
2. Post ‘em in by either picking up a free MobileMuster recycling satchel from Australia Post or printing off a reply paid mailing label from [www.mobilemuster.com.au](http://www.mobilemuster.com.au)

**ENDS**

**Interviews available with:**

- Rose Read, Manager Recycling, MobileMuster
  - Dr Judith Slocombe, CEO, The Alannah and Madeline Foundation
  - Jackie Van Vugt, General Manager, Cybersafety, The Alannah and Madeline Foundation
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Victoria Rooney</b><br/><b>IMPACT Communications</b><br/>(02) 9519 5411, 0408 499 765<br/><a href="mailto:victoria@impactcommunications.com.au">victoria@impactcommunications.com.au</a></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Frances Dwyer</b><br/><b>IMPACT Communications</b><br/>(02) 9519 5411, 0402 382 447<br/><a href="mailto:frances@impactcommunications.com.au">frances@impactcommunications.com.au</a></li> </ul> |
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**About MobileMuster:**

MobileMuster is a not-for-profit program funded solely by mobile phone manufacturers and network carriers to collect and recycle mobile phones. All mobiles are recycled to the highest environmental standards. None are refurbished or sold for reuse.

For further information on MobileMuster visit: [www.mobilemuster.com.au](http://www.mobilemuster.com.au)

**About The Alannah and Madeline Foundation:**

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation is a national charity protecting children from violence and its devastating effects. The Foundation cares for children who have experienced or witnessed violence and runs programs to help prevent violence in the lives of children.

For further information about The Alannah and Madeline Foundation visit: [www.amf.org](http://www.amf.org)