



## Children and Young People's Service Technology Bulletin

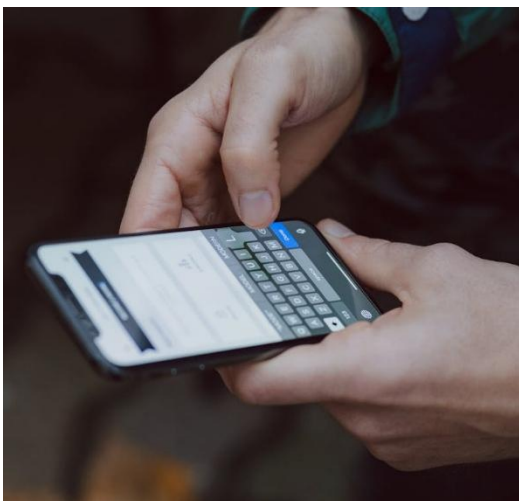
### Phone Safety

This Bulletin aims to offer clear, practical advice on how to set up and protect your device, prevent theft, and keep your personal information safe.

Mobile phones play an increasingly important role in supporting individuals with visual impairments access the wider community with greater confidence and independence. From navigation apps and public transport information to communication, emergency contacts, and accessibility features such as screen readers or magnification, smartphones can act as an essential everyday tool for travel, social connection, and personal safety.

At the same time, relying on a phone in public can create additional vulnerabilities. Holding phones for longer periods while checking directions, using accessibility apps, or reading information, can make individuals more visible targets for theft.

This bulletin explores practical ways to use smartphones safely and confidently, balancing the many benefits of technology with strategies to reduce risks while out in the community.



# 1. Turn on phone tracking

Phone tracking lets you:

- See where your phone is
- Lock the phone remotely
- Erase your data if needed
- Even if you can't get the phone back, you can protect your information.

## Apple:

Settings → Your Name → Find My → Find My iPhone

Turn **ON**:

### ✓ Find My iPhone

→ Allows location tracking

### ✓ Find My network

→ Helps find phone even if offline

### ✓ Send Last Location

→ Saves location when battery is low

### Important iPhone safety setting:

If a thief steals your phone while it's locked, they might still have access to your **Control Centre** which means they can put your phone in **Airplane Mode**, making it untraceable on **Find My iPhone**.

Settings → Face ID & Passcode → Control Centre OFF

## Android

Settings → Security → Find My Mobile → ON

# 2. Biometrics

Set up fingerprint and facial recognition to unlock your phone without using a pin.

## Apple

Settings → Face ID & Passcode

### ✓ Face ID

→ Unlocks using your face

### ✓ Touch ID

→ Unlocks using fingerprint

## Android

Settings → Security → Biometrics

- ✓ Fingerprint
- ✓ Face Unlock

## Banking apps

Enable biometrics inside your banking apps. This helps to protect your money if your phone is stolen.



## 3. Stolen device protection

### Apple

Turn ON **Stolen device protection**. If your phone is in an 'unfamiliar' location, for example, not at your home or at work, apps such as:

- Apple Wallet
- Saved passwords
- Security settings

can only be accessed via Face ID or Touch ID which helps block thieves even if they know your passcode.

How:

Settings → Face ID & Passcode → Turn ON Stolen Device Protection

### Android

Turn ON **Theft Protection**. Theft Protection offers two extra layers of security.

1: 'Theft Detection Lock': ensures that if someone were to run or cycle off with your phone, this feature would detect that movement and automatically lock your phone.

2: 'Offline Device Lock': if a thief steals your phone and puts it on airplane mode to try and make it untraceable, this feature automatically locks your phone.

How:

Settings → Security and privacy → Lost device protection → Theft protection → Turn on theft protection lock AND offline device lock.

## 4. Make note of the IMEI number

The IMEI number is a unique 15-digit code that every mobile device has. It can be used to block your phone and stop it from connecting to any network. The police can identify your phone using the IMEI number.

Dial **\*#06# (star, hash, zero, six, hash)** from your device to find the IMEI number. Make sure to write it down somewhere safe.

Alternative:

**Apple:** Settings → General → About

**Android:** Settings → About Phone

## 5. 2 Factor authentication

Two-factor authentication (2FA) is a security feature that adds extra protection to your accounts by requiring two different forms of identification. This usually includes something you know, like a password, and your smartphone. By introducing this additional step, 2FA makes it harder for hackers to gain access to your accounts even if they have your password.

Use authenticator apps like Microsoft Authenticator or Google Authenticator. These apps often use facial recognition or fingerprint verification, meaning a thief wouldn't be able to access your accounts even if they had your phone in their hands.

When enabling 2FA you can often add one or more trusted phone numbers that can receive verification codes if you need to sign in or recover access. A secondary number could belong to a trusted family member. This can be useful if you lose access to your main device.

## 6. Back up your phone

Backing your phone up regularly is essential to protecting your personal data such as photos and videos that can't be replaced.

By having a backup of your phone, it means that if your device is taken, you can wipe your device remotely without worrying about losing anything personal data.

### Apple

Back up with iCloud

1. Go to Settings > [Your Name] > iCloud > iCloud Backup.
2. Turn on iCloud Backup and tap Back Up Now.
3. Ensure essential data types (contacts, photos, app data) are included in the backup settings.

## Android

Back up with Google drive:

1. Open your device's Settings app.
2. Select Google and tap Backup. (If this is your first time, turn on Backup by Google One and follow the on-screen instructions.)
3. Tap Back up now.

## 7. Safety Controls

Parental controls on phones are managed via built-in tools like Google Family Link (Android) or Screen Time (iPhone), allowing parents to set app limits, block content, track locations, and restrict purchases.

### Apple:

Settings > Screen Time.

Tap "Content & Privacy Restrictions" to block explicit content, manage store purchases, and limit specific apps.

<https://support.apple.com>

### Android:

Google Play Store > Profile Icon > Settings > Family > Parental Controls

**Family Link App:** Google's Family Link app gives parents and guardians easy control over their child's Android devices from anywhere. Using the separate app, users can manage screen time by setting daily limits and bedtimes, monitor device activity, locate connected devices in real time, and remotely manage app permissions and downloads. <https://families.google/familylink/>

### Router settings

Most routers and broadband providers include Parental Controls or Access Controls. These features let you block specific websites, restrict access during certain hours (like bedtime), and set daily time limits for specific devices. You can access these by opening the settings in your broadband app.

## 8. Stay vigilant

Phone thieves tend to be on the lookout for easily accessible phones

- Cut down on using your phone in crowded areas. Try to keep it out of view whenever you can, especially in busy locations like train or Tube stations where theft is more common.
- Stay aware of what's happening around you. If you need to check your phone in public, choose a quieter spot and stand well back from the roadside, as thieves often target people near the curb.

- Make sure your phone is securely held. Consider using a case with a strap or wrist lanyard to keep it attached to you. While this won't guarantee safety, it can discourage opportunistic thieves.

## 9. What to do if your phone is stolen

### 1. Use tracking

- ✓ Use someone else's phone or a computer to log into Find my iPhone (apple) or Smart things Find (android) or Life360 (both) to locate or wipe your phone of personal information. See below for more information

### 2. Contact network

- ✓ Contact your mobile phone network to tell them your phone has been stolen.

### 3. Contact bank

- ✓ Contact your bank to freeze your accounts so they cannot be accessed by the thief on your phone.

### 4. Report to police

- ✓ Dial 101 to report the crime to the police. Do **not** call 999 as this is not an emergency. Provide IMEI.

### 5. Change passwords

- ✓ Change all of your passwords to prevent the thief accessing personal information.

## App recommendation:

### Life360

Life360 is a family safety and location-sharing app that can help teens feel more independent and secure when travelling or spending time away from home. The free version includes useful features such as real-time location sharing, place alerts, and arrival notifications, allowing family members to check that a young person has reached their destination safely. For families wanting extra support, paid plans offer additional features such as emergency assistance, roadside help, crash detection, and more detailed location history. Life360 can provide reassurance to both teens and their families while still encouraging independence, confidence, and greater freedom when out in the community.



## Find My

Apple's Find My app helps users keep track of their devices and belongings in one convenient place, even when devices are offline. Compatible with iPhone, iPad, Apple Watch, Mac, AirPods, and AirTag, the app uses Apple's secure network to provide real-time or last known locations. The app also helps to locate missing items. If a device or AirTag is lost, users can enable lost mode, which begins tracking its location and can notify the owner when it is found, making it easier to recover valuable devices quickly and securely.

## Smart Things Find

Samsung's device tracking features make it simple to locate and manage your Galaxy devices from one place. Using a Samsung smartphone, users can track compatible devices including Galaxy phones, tablets, watches, and earbuds. The service also allows location sharing, making it possible to share a device's location with trusted contacts so they can help find it, view its whereabouts, or trigger a sound to make the device ring.

