

mum, everyone has one /1/ no way

Every week, 3,000 mobile phones **are bought** for **kids under 16 years of age**. But do they need them? Jane Bidder keeps a diary of her daughter's first week 'connected'.

"**No way**," we **said to** our daughter, Lucy, when she **announced** that **the only thing** she **wanted** for her 14th birthday **was** a mobile phone. "L80 is **way too much**. **What's wrong with** a phonecard? What would you use it **for, anyway?**"

She had an answer for **each of the questions**. "**Everyone else** has **one**," she **argued, cleverly pointing to** a new **survey by** Philips, which showed that 350,000 British children under 16 had a mobile phone.

Remembering how **back in the 70s** I was **the only one** in my class who **wasn't allowed** those long **trendy** cardigans, I **gave in**. But **was I right to do so?**

Thursday. The night before 14th birthday. Lucy **has already unwrapped** her Pay As You Go (40p **a minute with no daily or monthly charges**) **which said that** it **might take** an hour **to** understand the instructions. It takes 10 minutes. My husband **and I** are **astonished by our daughter's familiarity with** technical **terms such as** SIM card (something **you** put in the back **to make it work**). She also knows exactly **how to** use her card, record her message, **work** the text messaging and play games on it. **However, she's not allowed to. Not until** tomorrow. Giles, our youngest, is now **demanding one** for his ninth birthday, but we're not **that** stupid. William, 16, is **uninterested**.