



*"These are important findings, but we are just at the beginnings of learning about potential effects of cell phones,"* said Leeka Kheifets, of the Department of Epidemiology at the University of California, Los Angeles, School of Public Health.

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Journal of  
**EPIDEMIOLOGY AND  
COMMUNITY HEALTH**

An international peer-reviewed journal for health professionals and researchers in all areas of epidemiology

Research Report

# Cell phone use and behavioural problems in young children

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Accepted 22 September 2010 - Published Online First 7 December 2010

## Abstract

Background Potential health effects of cell phone use in children have not been adequately examined. As children are using cell phones at earlier ages, research among this group has been identified as the highest priority by both national and international organisations. The authors previously reported results from the Danish National Birth Cohort (DNBC), which looked at prenatal and postnatal exposure to cell phone use and behavioural problems at age 7 years. Exposure to cell phones prenatally, and to a lesser degree postnatally, was associated with more behavioural difficulties. The original analysis included nearly

13 000 children who reached age 7 years by November 2006.

**Methods** To see if a larger, separate group of DNBC children would produce similar results after considering additional confounders, children of mothers who might better represent current users of cell phones were analysed. This 'new' dataset consisted of 28 745 children with completed Age-7 Questionnaires to December 2008.

**Results** The highest OR for behavioural problems were for children who had both prenatal and postnatal exposure to cell phones compared with children not exposed during either time period. **The adjusted effect estimate was 1.5 (95% CI 1.4 to 1.7). [ndlr : 50% = Health Alert]**

**Conclusions** The findings of the previous publication were replicated in this separate group of participants demonstrating **that cell phone use was associated with behavioural problems at age 7 years in children, and this association was not limited to early users of the technology. Although weaker in the new dataset, even with further control for an extended set of potential confounders, the associations remained.**