

LE PROGRÈS

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Mobile phone use: the city of Lyon teaches a lesson

"A mobile phone before they're 12? No way!" For the first time in France, a major city is launching a campaign to discourage the use of mobile phones among children.

It's a first. The city of Lyon has just launched a campaign to discourage the use of mobile phones by children under 12.

"This campaign aims to dissuade people from buying a mobile phone for a child as a Christmas present," say the Green Party in a press statement.

"This campaign of prevention, with ads on billboards and in the municipal paper, is aimed at young people, who are considered by scientists to be more vulnerable and therefore top of the list when it comes to being protected from the effects of mobile phones."

[Next-up [HD Video on distance and effects of mobile phone radiation](#)]

The really new, in fact unusual, factor is that this action is not being promoted by the city itself but by a political group, the Green Party, of which Mireille Roy, the council officer in charge, is a member. It's taking place in an interesting context.

If the question focuses on a matter of public health, the real issue is a political one. The protest by parents of several schools in Lyon, who are demanding the removal of phone masts erected close to schools, has left the city's politicians speechless - and with good reason.

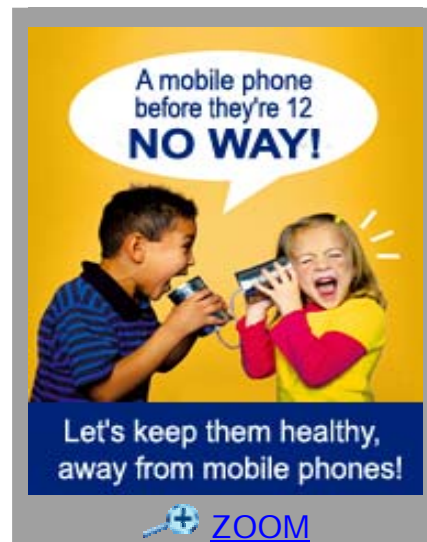
Neither the body of law authorised by the Council of State nor any other legal or regulatory directives allow local authorities any real freedom of action in this domain.

But in the face of mounting pressure, something had to be done. Thus the moment was ripe for this campaign, even though it would be possible for those who are concerned to bring a group action in court. Even if the two subjects don't have much in common. On one side, the telephones, on the other the phone masts.

The city plans to follow up this initiative with a second campaign on its Internet site for "the proper use of mobile phones". Meanwhile a pilot committee has been set up to revise the local mobile phone charter, with the main purpose of getting the permitted threshold of radiation from phone masts reduced to 1 V/m, as the consumer groups and the Greens are demanding.

Thus Mireille Roy is taking action to achieve the three objectives that she presented to the groups of concerned parents: to review the charter; **to work towards a lowering of permitted thresholds;** and to campaign for a more responsible use of mobile phones.

As for parents who would like to buy their children a mobile phone – they still have that choice ...
Geoffrey Mercier



**Taking effective action
is making mobile phones compatible with human health,
it's [helping Next-up](#) organisation in its fight,
especially to bring cases to court,
it's getting the BioInitiative standard adopted.**

[0.6V/m, why ? \(click\)](#)

