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PARENTS SOUND OFF AS TEENS RING UP £376 MILLION ON UNEXPECTED PHONE BILLS

New report from Tesco Mobile reveals the cost of teens' mobile phones

British parents are counting the cost of having to pay for their teenager's mobile phone calls with a third admitting they struggled financially to pay for their teens' calls.

The 'bank of mum & dad' bails out UK teenagers' phone bills to the tune of £374 million a year, with nearly half (48%) of parents paying their teen's mobile bill.

For many teens, running up costly phone bills has become a way to increase their pocket money by stealth from parents.

Of the 2000 parents of 16-19 year olds surveyed by Tesco Mobile almost half (43%) of parents confess they feel under pressure to pay their teenager's mobile phone bills.

Temper tantrums if they don't pay (34%) and concerns about their teens' safety (34%) are the top reasons parents cite for footing the bill.

With the growing popularity of mobile add-ons and the increase in ways to pay for services via mobile phone (premium subscriptions and text voting) the opportunities for teenagers to run up higher bills than expected are ever greater.

Tesco Mobile has launched a brand new 'Cap Your Mobile Spend' service which gives all the benefits and value of a Pay monthly tariff but with the control of Pay as You Go top-up.

Customers choose to receive a set amount of Pay monthly credit each month and when the credit is used up they simply top-up just like Pay as You Go, without the risk of running up a large bill.

Lance Batchelor, Chief Executive Officer of Tesco Mobile and Tesco Telecoms commented:

"This is a great way to avoid bail out banking.

"Mobile phones are a central part of our lifestyles, and an important way to keep in touch but

not at the cost of getting into financial difficulties.

“You can set a cap on your own mobile or any other Tesco Mobile phones you pay the bill for.”

The new capped tariff is available to all Tesco Mobile customers.

-Ends-

Notes to editors

- *Research undertaken by OnePoll for Tesco Mobile, September 2009

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About Tesco Mobile:

Tesco Mobile is a 50:50 joint venture between Tesco and O2. The company sells exclusively Tesco Mobile branded services in Tesco stores, online and through Tesco Direct, across the UK using O2's technology and network. The service gives Tesco Mobile customers value, simplicity and choice, offering them simple, great value tariffs with rewards such as free credit and Clubcard points. Tesco Mobile has been voted as the number one mobile network for customer satisfaction by Which Magazine (May 09).