

FirstNews

LOOK
UP!

PUT
YOUR
PHONE
DOWN



A First News campaign to warn children about the dangers of not putting mobile phones away while crossing the road.



THE PROBLEM

Source: Government figures 2022,
Royal Society for the Prevention of
Accidents (RoSPA)



Crossing the road without paying proper attention can be dangerous. The statistics show how serious the problem is:

- In 2022, 4,913 pedestrians, aged 15 and under, were hurt on UK roads.
- Tragically, 1,417 of those were either killed or left with serious injuries. That's around four child pedestrians a day, or a class of 28 children every week!
- Data shows that children aged 12 are most likely to be involved in an accident, when many young people are walking independently to, and from, school.
- The largest number of injuries take place between 8am to 9am and between 3pm to 7pm.

What solutions can prevent these accidents from happening?



THE SMOMBIE PROBLEM



Studies have shown that phones are a major cause of distraction for pedestrians, affecting whether they cross a road safely. There's even a name for people distracted by phones: SMOMBIES!

- Although many people are distracted by mobile phones, children are the most affected. By the age of 11, 91% of children in the UK own a smartphone. There is a clear link between the use of mobile devices and the time of serious accidents involving children, particularly at the end of the school day.
- Researchers from the University of Lincoln found that out of 3,000 road crossings by pupils, nearly a third were holding a phone or another device, and that pupils looked left and right less frequently when they had them. The researchers concluded that the safety of school-age pedestrians is affected by mobile phones and music players.

Do you look at your mobile phone when you are walking?



SOLUTIONS

What possible solutions are there to save lives and prevent serious injuries?



1. Is a change in the **law** needed?
2. Is a **tech** solution required?
3. Do people need to be more **aware of the dangers** of being distracted while crossing the road?



SOLUTION 1: A CHANGE IN THE LAW

In some places, authorities fine those caught crossing the road while looking at their phone.

ABU DHABI

Pedestrians caught staring at social media while crossing can receive a warning.

KOSOVO

The Government of Kosovo imposes a €50 fine for pedestrians who cross the road with a phone in hand.

"Pedestrians who use their mobile phones while walking or crossing roads pose a danger to themselves and other road users, because their attention is taken by what they are doing and they tend to forget about the traffic around them."

– *Jamal Al Ameri from Abu Dhabi's traffic police department*



Do we need similar laws in the UK?



SOLUTION 2: CLEVER TECH

Starling Technology wants to introduce **smart crossings** to the UK. The crossings use sensors to detect when people want to cross, and use low-energy LEDs to light up the road itself – so even if a pedestrian was staring at their phone, they would still be alerted when it was safe to cross.

In **Beijing**, China, smart crossings are already in use – zebra crossings are lined with lights that change colour from red to green when it's safe to cross, and they can play audio messages that warn when the traffic lights are about to change. The system can also take pictures of drivers and pedestrians who are caught breaking the rules and crossing when they're not supposed to. Those caught on camera are then shown, with their faces blurred, on a large screen nearby.



What do you think? Could technology help out?



SOLUTION 3: RAISING AWARENESS

First News has launched a campaign to warn young people about the dangers of crossing roads while using a phone. The campaign is called **Look Up!**



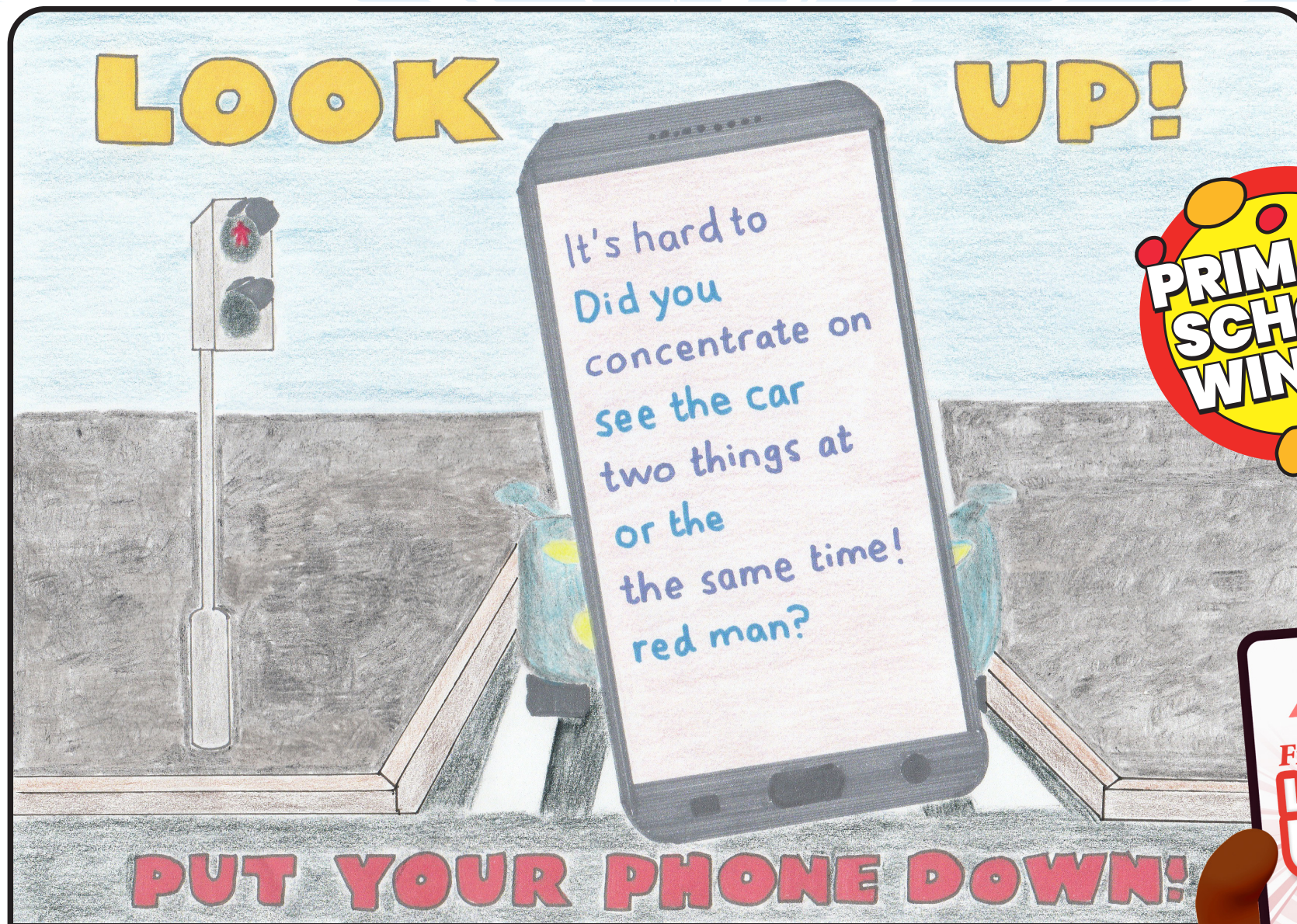
Children around the UK designed posters specially for the Look Up! campaign when it first launched.

Take a look at the winning posters on the next slide.



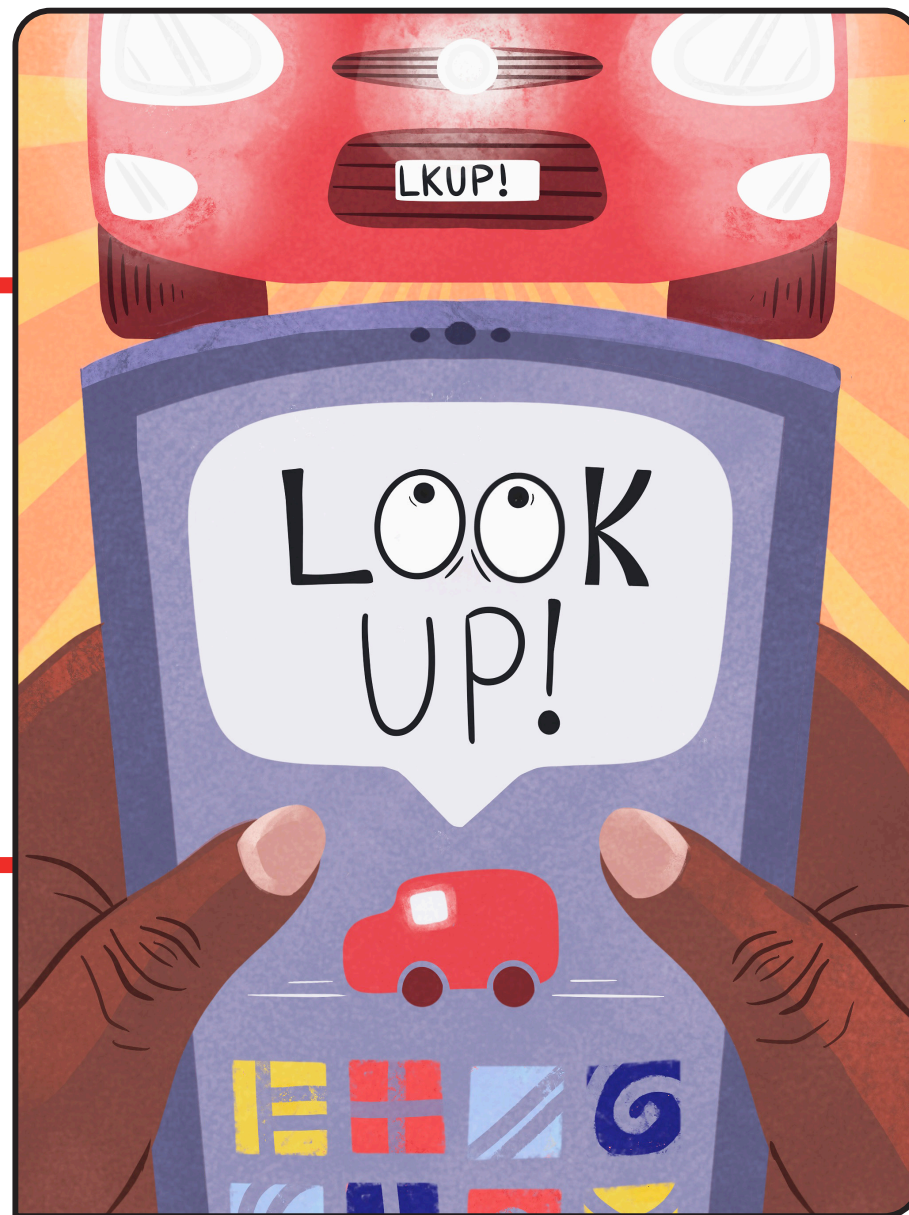
Is raising awareness enough to solve the problem?





JAMES B, AGED 11, HAMSTEL JUNIOR SCHOOL

**BRIDIE H,
AGED 16,
BUXTON
COMMUNITY
SCHOOL**



WATCH THE FILM THAT SKY KIDS' FYI: FOR YOUR INFO MADE FOR THE *FIRST NEWS* LOOK UP! CAMPAIGN



1. Find out more about the problem

2. Discover more about the tech solutions

3. Hear what other young people think should be done

[first.news/
LookUpTeachers](https://first.news/LookUpTeachers)



SO NOW IT'S OVER TO YOU!



What's your opinion?



What do you think the solution is?



How does society address this serious problem?





**PUT
YOUR
PHONE
DOWN**

Could your class design Look Up! posters to put up around your school? Share them with us for a chance to be featured in *First News*!

