Mobile phone theft

Estelle is 13. Last week she was a victim of robbery. Here she tells the story of what happened:

’Last Thursday I went to the cinema with two of my mates. After the film Julie and Kadeesha wanted to go and get some chips but I couldn’t be bothered to wait for them so I got the bus home. I jumped on and went to sit on the back seat of the top deck, there was nobody else up there. Natasha called me on my mobile to see how the film was and we talked for a while. While we were talking three girls got on the bus and sat in the seat in front of me. I recognised them from the year above me in my school. When I finished talking to Natasha one of the girls moved on to the back seat as well and said that she liked my phone. My mum bought it for my birthday, it was really small with a camera on and loads of ring-tones and everything. She said that it was a really nice phone and that she wanted to get one. Then she said she might as well take mine. She got hold of my arm and shoved me really hard. The other two girls were suddenly standing up and I felt scared and I didn’t know what to do so I just gave it to her. Then they got off the bus. I felt so stupid for just handing over the phone to some girl.’

This is what happened to Estelle after she had her phone stolen:

’I told my mum what happened when I got home. I felt like a right idiot but I didn’t want those girls to get away with it. My mum told me to call up my network provider straight away to block my number so the phone would be useless. She also told me to give the network provider my IMEI number, which she had written down when she first bought me the phone. I didn’t know this but you can find it out by pressing *#06* on your handset and when the IMEI number is blocked the handset is useless to the person that stole it too, so it makes everything they’ve done totally pointless. Then my mum called the police for me. After we made the calls to the network provider and the police, my mum told me to go on to this website called www.menduk.org where she had registered my IMEI number and contact details before she gave me the phone. The website allows you to register your phone as stolen, and because it is part of the police phone register, if the police get your phone back, they can tell it’s yours and give it back to you! The police arrested the girls and it turned out that there was a security camera on the top deck of the 73 bus, so there is evidence to use against the girls when they go to court, and best of all, even though the girls had sold my phone to somebody else, the police traced it and I’ve got it back’

Exercise 1

Working in pairs, fill in the table of mobile phone safety ‘Dos’ and ‘Don’ts’ together. The first couple have been done for you.

| Do | Put your phone on silent when you are in public. |
| Don’t | Walk and text at the same time |

Exercise 2

Estelle’s mum took some good precautions to protect the phone when she first bought it. In your pairs, think about these questions:
a) What were the two precautions she took?
b) How can you find out your IMEI number?
c) Imagine that you want to send a friend advice in a text message on how to protect their phone and write down how you would explain to them. Remember that this is a text, so it has to be short.

Exercise 3

Complete the flow chart below with the actions you should take in the event of having your phone stolen.

Phone is stolen

Report robbery to______

and your______

Log into

www.________
to register the phone as stolen

Supplementary ICT project

Register your mobile phone on www.menduk.org

If more people blocked their IMEI number after having their phones stolen, over time the number of phones that are stolen each year would drop.