

-teen tonic

DODGING

your own cell phone spies

When it comes to tracking mobiles, youngsters are beating their parents at their own game

DC CORRESPONDENT

If parents who wanted to keep tabs on their errant offspring thought they were being clever by installing spying software on their kids' mobile phones, youngsters have shown they're even smarter — and generally one step ahead.

Wily, resourceful teenagers are resorting to ingenious methods to outwit worried parents and ensure their personal life remains personal.

Says Mumbai-based 16-year-old Anand Athaley, "When I found out that my parents had installed spyware on my phone, I couldn't confront them because I knew they'd ask me questions like, 'Is there something you're trying to hide?'. I just went ahead and bought a second phone. It is a very basic model — and I use that to stay in touch with my friends. I use my 'original' phone to talk to my parents, relatives and a couple of friends in my class."

Despite all their clever ploys, teenagers have discovered to their dismay that some parents have picked up on their undisclosed



In *Adapt the Parents*, the girl's father spies on her boyfriend and also puts him through a lie detector test

'I USE THE CELL PHONE ONLY FOR NERDS'

relationships and use of foul language by tracking their phone conversations.

Reena D'Souza (name changed), a 17-year-old Chennaiite, decided against buying an Internet-enabled phone to reduce the risk of her parents spying on her. "My friend's parents found out about her boyfriend, and that somehow, justified their spying. That's how the parents looked at it. I don't know if my parents would do that or not, but it's better to be safe. I don't want to end up having a big

fight with them because of this issue."

To beat nosy parents, some clever young minds team up with technical geniuses. Says Akriti Sharma, a first year mass communications student from Delhi, "One of my friends is a tech-junkie and he knows everything about gadgets. So, when I suspected my phone was being tracked, I immediately stopped making calls and sending messages. I took my phone to him, and he told me that spyware had been installed on the

phone — I could either uninstall it, in which case my parents would know, or find some other way of keeping my personal life private."

But Akriti chose an unusual option. "I confronted my parents about it and told them that they should ask me if they wanted to know anything about my friends. I left my cellphone at home after that and refused to use it for almost a month, until they came around and un-installed it themselves!"

'No Indian girlfriend for my hero'

ANRITA RATH

Neeraj Chibba's maiden book, *Zero Percentile — Missed IT, Kissed Russia* is centred around a teenager Pankaj Sharma. Born into a middle-class family in Punjab, he is tailor-made made for IT.

Says Neeraj, "My protagonist Pankaj is brilliant, hard-working and is dedicated to his dream of making it to IIT. Yet, he fails; but fate takes him to Volgograd, Russia."

Neeraj has fallen back on his own experience to write the book. He says, "Since, I did my engineering in Russia and I lived there for almost seven and a half years, I am familiar with the place. I really wanted people to see Volgograd through my eyes. Yes, a couple of experiences in the book are pretty much related to mine. Like this one — I was at the Volgograd airport and I got talking to a pretty Russian female. It was funny as she did not know English and I could not converse in



Neeraj Chibba

Russian then." Neeraj continues to explain more about these funny situations that occur in the book. "He has to have an education in a language he had never heard before, beat the weather blues (in winter the temperature falls to -32 degrees), land for himself for mundane things like daily food. In the process things get somewhat extreme once in a while and he lands up in jail and his best friend gets AIDS."

Like any other story, romance brews between this young Indian lad Pankaj and Sveta, a Russian pretty lass. In Neeraj's words: "I felt that was the point of falling in love with an Indian girl even in Russia? Pankaj finds his true love in Sveta."

Cool TOOL



I might be a little heavy on the pocket, but it's definitely worth saving up your allowance. 3D web cameras, that allow you to chat with friends wearing those funky 3D glasses, and capture videos that have the same effect as a 3D movie in the theatres, are on the wishlist of many teenagers now. The web-cam looks as cute as a red robot, and can be connected to the system using the USB port. Video chat with your friends, and ensure they wear a pair of 3D glasses, and everything you do will instantly 'pop out' of their computer screen, and even the most minute motions will be captured. So bag, borrow or steal and

Tweet OF THE WEEK



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Giving up. Dry humour
is dead.



Trend ALERT



Statement bags are making it big this season. From the eco-friendly bags that scream 'I'm NOT a plastic bag, made popular by several Hollywood celebrities, to bags that have cool statements like *Gaon ki Gori or Haathi mera Saathi*, these bags are sure to grab the eye balls and add to your cool factor. Plus, they instantly

