

New mobile app to keep us safe

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Swinburne University of Technology Faculty of Design academics have devised a new smartphone app that can be used by teenagers to let parents know they are safe, and also by adults to let family, friends and emergency workers track their mobile in an emergency.

The [iStaySafe app](#) was the brainchild of Swinburne lecturers in Digital Media Design, James Marshall, and Bill Trikojus, and its development was fast tracked following the disappearance and murder of Melbourne woman Jill Meagher.

The app allows users to send a picture and a map of their location to [friends](#), family and carers. It can be programmed to send automatic reminders so the user doesn't forget to check in.

"iStaySafe is the perfect app for teenagers who don't want the embarrassing phone call from their parents, trying to find out where they are," Mr Marshall said.

"We also know that some teenagers send a text message to their parents, but they may not actually be in the location they say they are.

"With one easy button click they can send a picture of themselves to their friends and family, and they can choose between using either the front or back camera on their smart phone.

"As well as sending a picture, a map is sent showing their [GPS location](#)."

There is also a setting for automatic reminders, so users can send 'check in' messages at set times to family and friends letting them know they are safe.

The iStaySafe app also allows the user to choose to send messages by both email and SMS.

Mr Marshall said a key feature of the iStaySafe app is that users can send an emergency alert if they need help.

"This will allow your family and friends to track the location of your mobile phone for the next 24 hours," Mr Marshall said.

The iStaySafe app has wide applications not just for use by teenagers, but carers of those with a disability, the elderly who live alone, people who may do long-distance travel, or women who travel late at night.

"This app gives people [peace of mind](#), knowing that they can check in with [family](#) and friends, just to let them know if they are safe or if they are in trouble and need help."

The [app](#) is available now to download from the iTunes store.

Provided by Swinburne University of Technology

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