

## Messaging Safety Tips

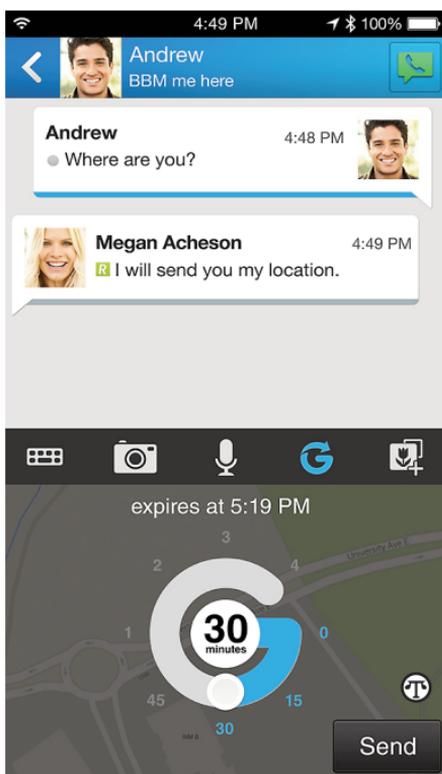
(NAPSA)—Mobile messaging applications have been called one of the most exciting and fast-growing spaces in this increasingly digital world. There are a myriad of services to choose from, including BBM (which is now available for iPhone and Android smartphones), WhatsApp, iMessage and more. While it is certainly a fun and easy way to connect, parents and children must be vigilant about using messaging services in a safe and appropriate way. Here are a few key tips to keep in mind for safe messaging:

### **Chat only with people you know personally**

Billions of messages are sent each day and user numbers are skyrocketing as more and more messaging apps hit the market. While it's wonderful that so many people are connecting and interacting, it also means users must be careful about with whom they connect. As a rule, message only those people you know personally. Unless you have met the person you are chatting with, it's wise to end the conversation. Avoid posting your PIN or user ID on social networks.

### **Know the appropriate time to message**

It's important to be aware of appropriate and inappropriate times to message. Hanging out at home? Fire away. Out meeting up with friends? Not a problem. Times when your phone should stay tucked safely in your pocket include behind the wheel of a car; walking in a busy part of town; sitting in a crowded bus; and many other instances in which it is important that you remain aware of your surroundings. Message only when it's safe and your attention is not needed elsewhere. For those times when you have to send a quick note in a pinch, features such as group chats can help you quickly reach multiple people at once, reducing the time you spend focused on your phone. With BBM's Glympse feature, you



**It can be exciting to meet new people and carry on conversations via messaging apps, but it's important to know exactly who is on the other end.**

can simply share your location with friends and family so they see how close you are in lieu of typing out a detailed message.

### **Send only the content you would be comfortable becoming public**

If you wouldn't be comfortable sharing the message publicly, think twice about sending it at all. Once you press send on a message, it's officially out of your control and the recipient can do with it what he or she pleases. So always be aware of what you're putting out there.

Whether you're using BBM, traditional SMS or any other chat service, it's important to approach messaging with a healthy dose of common sense. Always be aware, know to whom you're talking and be cautious when sharing sensitive information.