



## Press Release

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### **CAREGIVER AND SENIOR PROBLEM-SOLVING OPPORTUNITIES REVEALED IN NEW VTECH COMMUNICATION SURVEY**

*Caregivers Cite Desire to Help More and Address Communication  
Needs of Seniors Wanting to Age in Place*

**BEAVERTON, Ore.**, January 8, 2013 – More than 60 percent of caregivers spend at least nine hours with a senior a week, but both groups see ways to improve the time apart, according to a survey<sup>1</sup> exploring communications challenges and perceptions in senior-caregiver relationships. The survey was conducted by VTech<sup>®</sup> Communications, a wholly owned subsidiary of VTech Holdings Ltd. (HKSE: 303) and fielded by independent market research firm Toluna.

The VTech Caregiver/Senior Communication Survey found that caregivers worried most about the time seniors were alone, while seniors missed an active social life. Survey results were revealed in advance of Silvers Summit, a conference and exhibition on technology for seniors at the annual International CES in Las Vegas (VTech Booth #26921).

The survey examined the issues caregivers and seniors face in communicating as seniors strive to age independently. More than a third of caregivers said their greatest concern is that they were not doing enough for the seniors in their lives. From the other perspective, 41 percent of seniors said their top challenge was not being as active or social as they would like. These top concerns overshadowed both groups' worries about financial issues or other realities of aging and caregiving.

Another key finding of the survey was that nearly seven of 10 caregivers said they experience challenges communicating with seniors under their care, citing physical limitations such as hearing problems, illness or disabilities as top concerns. The majority (59.3 percent) of seniors, however, noted no communication challenges -- of those that did, physical difficulties topped the list.

"The VTech survey confirms that staying connected and sharing experiences are essentials of healthy aging and maintaining self-esteem," says Adriane Berg, international speaker and aging expert. "For caregivers, ease of communication with the seniors they love relieves stress, reduces guilt and builds rich relationships. Whether emotional, technical or financial, any barriers to communication are detrimental to seniors and caregivers, alike. Addressing barriers to connectivity adds to senior confidence and security, and promotes vital inter-generational exchange."

The survey responses revealed a variety of communications styles. More than a third of seniors and caregivers have casual relationships and are comfortable chatting frequently. More caregivers (20 percent) than seniors (9.3 percent) felt a strain in their communication, and more seniors (36 percent) than caregivers (19.4 percent) described their relationships as sharing every

activity and update. While more than half of surveyed seniors don't worry about being alone, almost all caregivers surveyed (93.5 percent) identified at least one potential situation that worried them, such as a fall, injury or crisis.

### ***Staying Safe While Home Alone***

Many seniors experience long hours alone at home – 91.6 percent of seniors surveyed said they spend time alone during the week. Their top worries, along with their caregivers' concerns, included:

- Fall or injury (76.1 percent of caregivers and 33 percent of seniors)
- Medical event or injury requiring immediate assistance (60.8 percent of caregivers and 25.2 percent of seniors)
- Other general problems that seniors wouldn't feel equipped to deal with alone (45.9 percent of caregivers and 14 percent of seniors)

Seniors and their caregivers identified products they felt supported independent lifestyles, aging and peace of mind:

- **Communication tools** such as email, phones, cellphones and Skype – 41.7 percent total
- **Healthcare technology** such as blood pressure monitors and medication dispensers – 36.7 percent total
- **Personal safety products** such as wearable pendants to call someone in case of an emergency and home alarm system – 29.4 percent

### **VTech's CareLine Personal Communications System Helps Fill Gaps**

Addressing caregiver needs to reach their loved ones, and seniors' desire to remain connected and social, VTech's new CareLine™ home safety telephone system supports independent living. Designed with experts in aging and technology, the three-piece CareLine SN6197 system (MSRP: \$119.95), includes a full-featured corded phone, a cordless handset and a wearable pendant. Blending the comfort and ease of a home phone with the security and flexibility of personal safety products, CareLine puts the ability to connect with trusted contacts at seniors' fingertips.

VTech's CareLine has no monthly fees, installation costs or contracts, making it an affordable alternative to personal emergency response systems (PERS). Designed to meet the daily communication needs of seniors, the wearable pendant allows them to conveniently make and receive calls, listen to voicemail messages, review missed calls or receive programmed reminders for medication, appointments or other events.

"We recognized seniors and their caregivers needed a tool to bridge the unique communications needs and challenges that come with aging," said Matt Ramage, senior vice president of product management for VTech Communications. "Families can use features such as recorded reminders to help seniors manage their lives independently, and they can trust the wearable pendant for quick connection for immediate needs. In turn, seniors have the connectivity tools to help them stay independent."

For more information about the VTech Caregiver/Senior Communication Survey or VTech's CareLine System, please visit [www.vtechphones.com/careline](http://www.vtechphones.com/careline).

### About VTech

VTech is the world's largest manufacturer of cordless telephones and electronic learning products. It also provides highly sought-after contract manufacturing services. Founded in 1976, the Group's mission is to be the most cost effective designer and manufacturer of innovative, high-quality consumer electronic products and to distribute them to markets worldwide in the most efficient manner.

1. *Toluna, Inc. fielded the study on behalf of VTech from 12/13/12 to 12/22/12 via its online omnibus service, interviewing a nationwide sample of 678 Americans aged 18 years and older, of which 464 were caregivers and 214 were seniors. Data was weighted using propensity score weighting to be representative of the total U.S. adult population on the basis of region, age within gender, education, household income, race/ethnicity, and propensity to be online. Data for questions related to online use or behaviors were weighted specifically to the respective "online" populations. No estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated; a full methodology is available.*