Post Ryan, jittery parents bank on gadgets to monitor kids

Kolkata: The brutal murder of an eight-year-old at a branch of Rian International School has triggered panic among parents, 1,600 km away.

An increasing number of anxious parents are now swapping for apps and gadgets - that can be downloaded or shipped in the children's uniforms or bags to help monitor their kids' activities.

It is Class VIII student in Newtown School. "In wake of the Ryan incident, there has been a lot of clamour in and around all the schools and on social networking platforms. The concern is also resonating in social group chats of parents. Ujjwala Sinha, an entrepreneur, has a daughter studying in Class V of Shri Shikshayatan School. Being a parent, she is part of several parents' chat groups that have members not only from school but also from tuition classes. "We have been discussed on an app called 'Mama Bear'," she said. "The tech companies have a responsibility to ensure the safety of our children."

Keeping an eye on the clock

Newtown School
- There are 10 gates to the campus. They read data of Radio Frequency Identification cards given to children. If the data is not read within a particular time, it sends a message to the school that the student is out of campus.
- The school has also installed apps on the parents' mobiles that can track the movement of students.

Heritage School
- The school has a process of developing an app that will allow parents to track the children when they are on campus. There is also a GPS system in place so that the parents know where the child is at any point.

South Point High School
- The school is also in the process of getting the OHSAS 18001:2007 Occupational Health and Safety Management Certification from the British Standards Institute (BSI). A regular audit will ensure that the school is safe for all students, teachers, and staff.

Garden High School, South City International School, all DPS schools in city
- The school has installed 'MySchoolBus' app. Video cameras have been installed in low schools for live streaming activities.

Once a bus comes within a pick-up/drop location, parents receive a SMS on their mobile app notification that the bus is available for picking up. This helps in reducing the risks associated with health and safety in the school.