

TO THE MAX!



JOSH

Hey Josh, did you score a DVD?



SAMMIE

Sure did, sis! The bank upped my credit card limit to \$5000. I've maxed it out already!

He got this camera phone too. You can surf the Web and play wicked games! Hey Josh, your SMS horoscope came through!



MUM



LENA

Wish I had a phone like that. Hey, it's Kaz's birthday soon. I want to get her a pair of jeans like yours Lena, if I can afford it!



KAZ

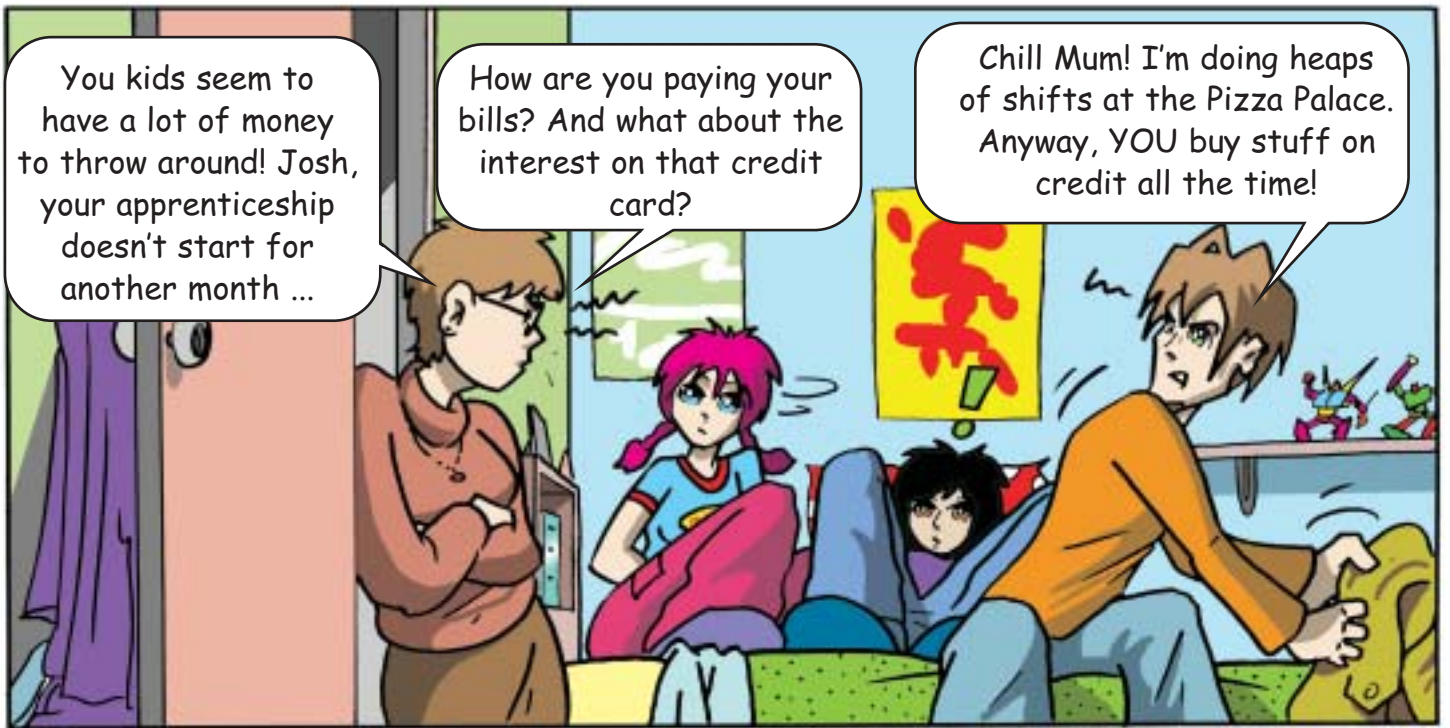
Pretty expensive present! These jeans cost \$120!



Woo-hoo! My horoscope says I'm in for a BIG surprise!



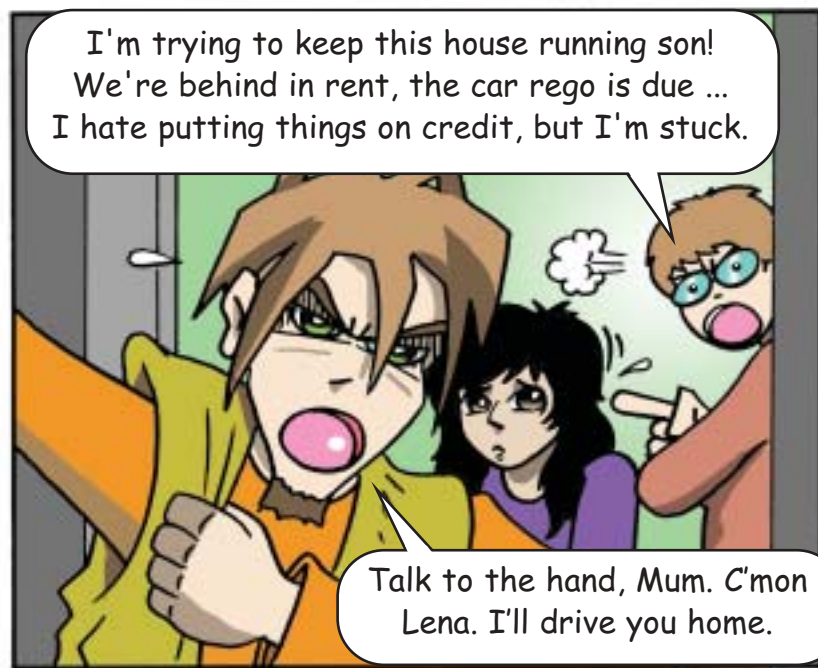
Kaz always gives me expensive things.



You kids seem to have a lot of money to throw around! Josh, your apprenticeship doesn't start for another month ...

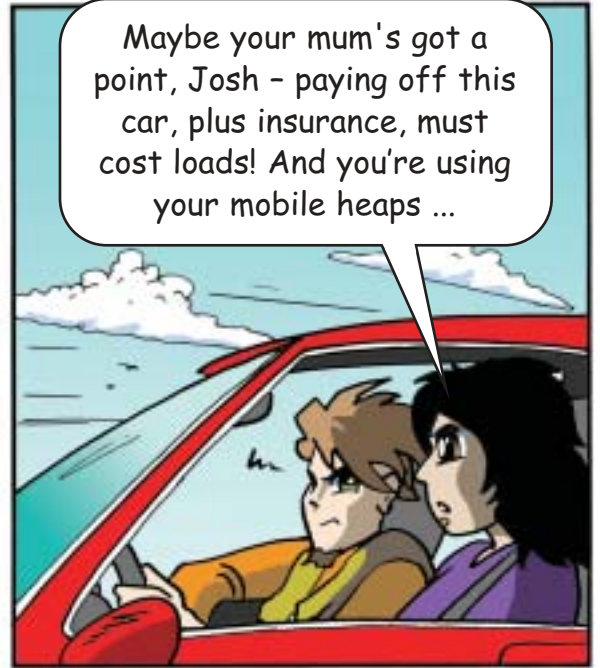
How are you paying your bills? And what about the interest on that credit card?

Chill Mum! I'm doing heaps of shifts at the Pizza Palace. Anyway, YOU buy stuff on credit all the time!

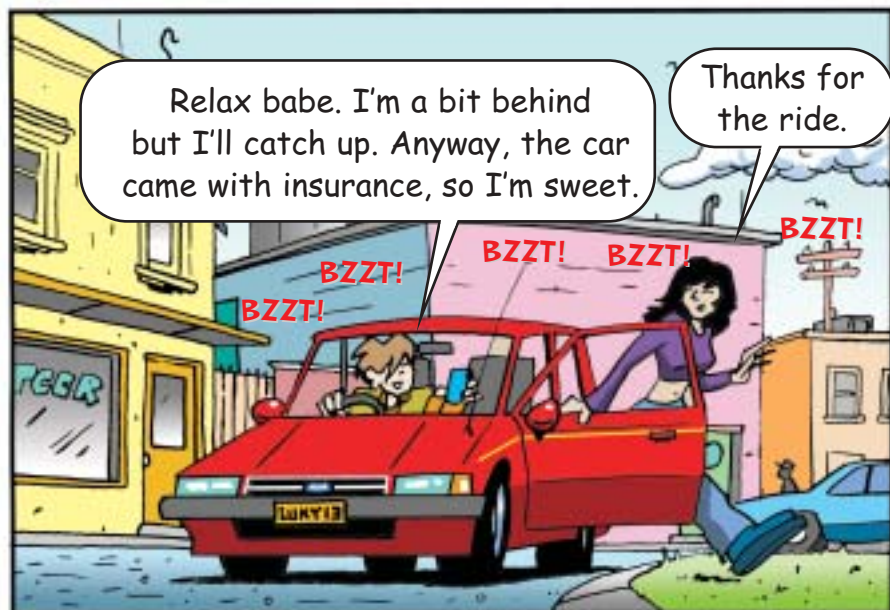


I'm trying to keep this house running son! We're behind in rent, the car rego is due ... I hate putting things on credit, but I'm stuck.

Talk to the hand, Mum. C'mon Lena. I'll drive you home.



Maybe your mum's got a point, Josh - paying off this car, plus insurance, must cost loads! And you're using your mobile heaps ...

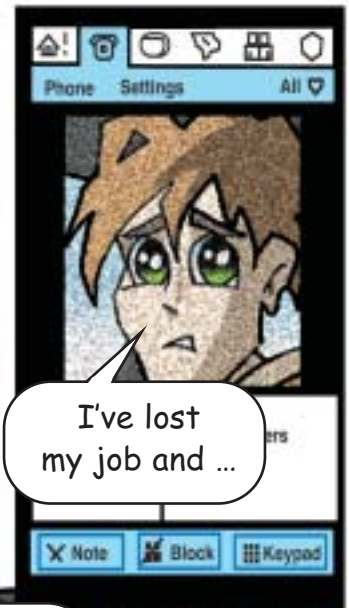


Relax babe. I'm a bit behind but I'll catch up. Anyway, the car came with insurance, so I'm sweet.

Thanks for the ride.



Yo, Mario. What's up?





* 3rd party personal insurance (also known as a Green Slip) is compulsory insurance that covers passengers, the other driver, or pedestrians, against injury. To protect the other car you need 3rd party property insurance and to cover your car as well, you need comprehensive insurance. This costs extra, but could save you loads if you have an accident.

One week later ...

I wish I could stay at your place, Kaz. Things are pretty heavy round here ...



Poor Sammie ... but cheer up, only two more sleeps till my birthday! Can't wait to see what you're getting me ...



Later ...



If I save \$30 a week for six months I'll have enough for a holiday for Mum ...

Let's see ... there are 26 weeks in 6 months ... so if I save \$30 each week, that works out at ...
 $26 \times \$30 = \780 (holiday!)



And if I save another \$30 for only five weeks I can also buy a pre-paid mobile!

$\$30 \times 5 = \150 (pre-paid phone and credit)

I don't know if I can afford those jeans for Kaz, though.



Later ...

Kaz, my present to you is a night out at the movies with me! And I'll cook dinner too ...



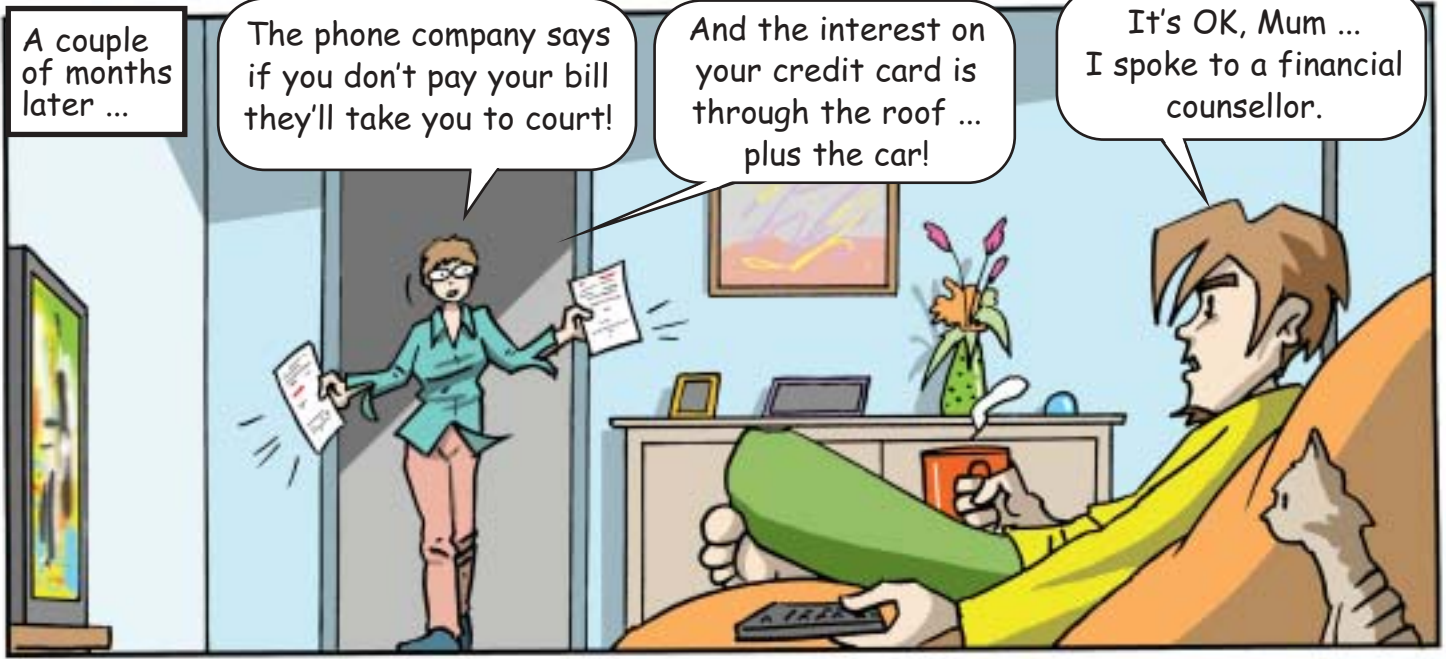
I'd love that! I'm glad you didn't say you got me clothes.



I'm soooo over all the brands. I hate being a walking ad. Like doesn't anyone dress like an individual anymore??

A walking ad. That's so true!



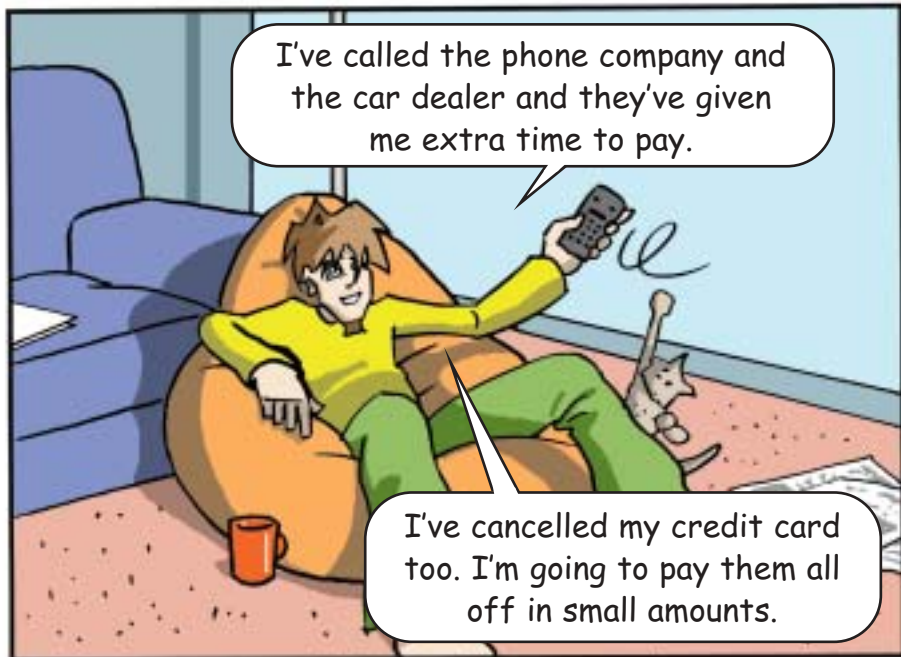


A couple of months later ...

The phone company says if you don't pay your bill they'll take you to court!

And the interest on your credit card is through the roof ... plus the car!

It's OK, Mum ... I spoke to a financial counsellor.



I've called the phone company and the car dealer and they've given me extra time to pay.

I've cancelled my credit card too. I'm going to pay them all off in small amounts.



Groan ... you're going to be in debt for years!



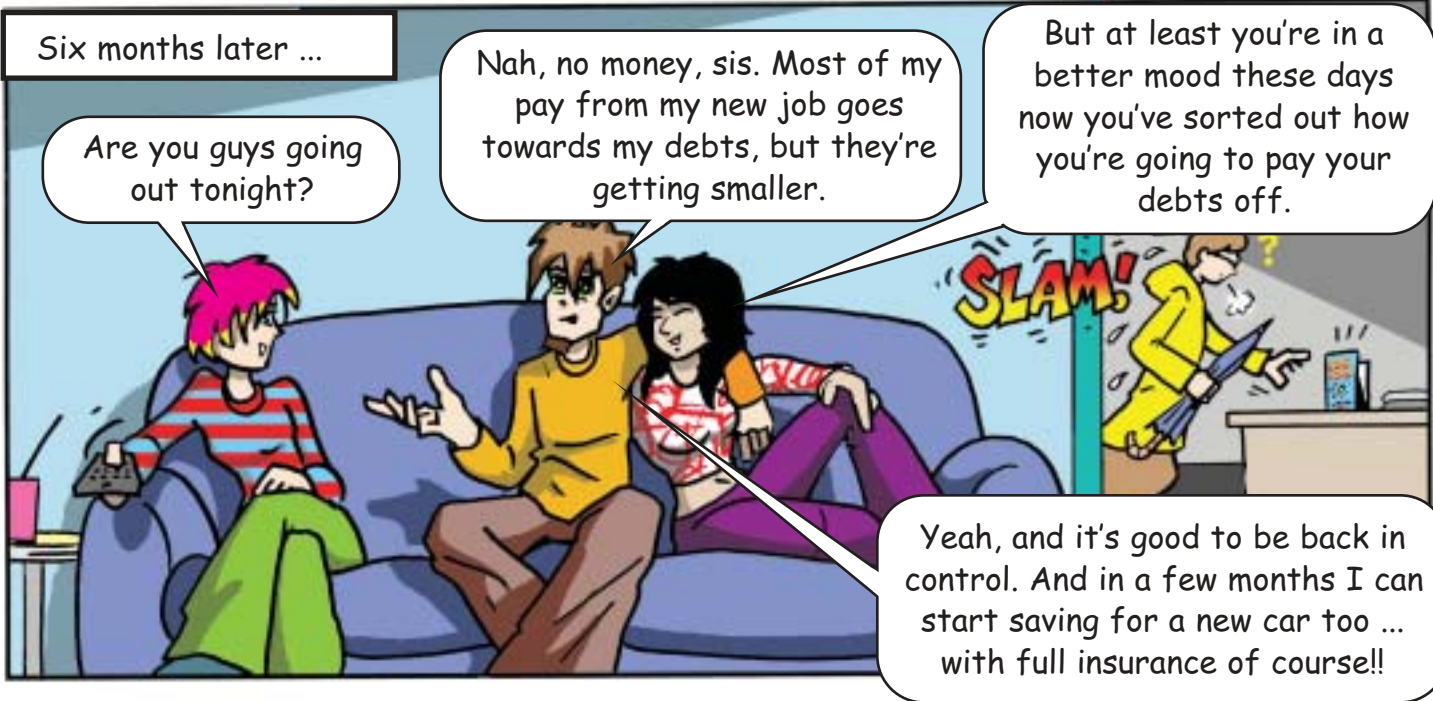
Yeah, Mum, but there's no quick and easy way out. I might already have a bad credit rating* for being behind on my payments, which could stop me buying another car, or even an apartment when I'm older.



From now on, let's promise each other to try and save up for the things we need.

Yeah, we don't need this stress!

* A bad credit rating is a public record of any unpaid bills (such as gas, electricity or telephone) or loans you might have. Banks, retailers, mobile and credit companies check these records when anyone applies for credit.



Six months later ...

Are you guys going out tonight?

Nah, no money, sis. Most of my pay from my new job goes towards my debts, but they're getting smaller.

But at least you're in a better mood these days now you've sorted out how you're going to pay your debts off.

Yeah, and it's good to be back in control. And in a few months I can start saving for a new car too ... with full insurance of course!!



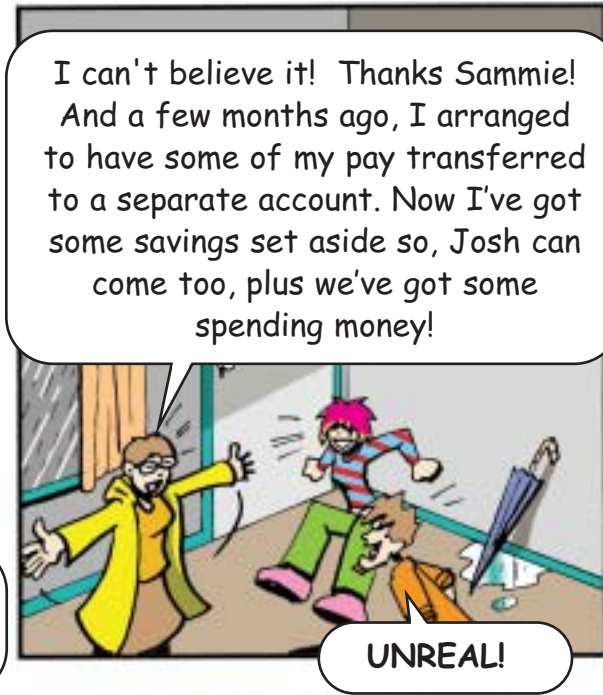
Have you told Mum about her surprise yet?

Nope ... she's just about to find out.



What's this brochure, kids?

It's your holiday, Mum! I saved up and bought us two tickets up the coast!



I can't believe it! Thanks Sammie! And a few months ago, I arranged to have some of my pay transferred to a separate account. Now I've got some savings set aside so, Josh can come too, plus we've got some spending money!

UNREAL!



And so...

Now this is living to the MAX!

TRUE!

Yeah, and without the monthly bill!

THE END

JOSH & SAMMIE'S CASH TIP\$



If you get used to handling money when you're our age you won't get stressed like Mum did. Try keeping a diary of what you're spending so you know exactly what's going on.

Getting ripped off sucks. If you want a mobile, car finance or credit card, shop around and ask questions.



If bills are coming in, try to pay off the whole balance every month. Otherwise it could take years to pay back.



Watch out for fines. They add up! And if you're buying a car, don't feel pressured to sign up for finance with a car dealer. Suss out your other options with a bank or credit union.

Need help? Get FREE advice!

Kids Help Line
1800 55 1800

ACT
Care Financial Counselling Service: 02 6257 1788

NSW
Credit Line Helpline: 1800 808 488
Financial Counsellors Association of NSW: 0500 888 079
or www.acwa.asn.au/fcan
Consumer Credit Legal Centre: 02 9212 4111
or 1800 247 890 (rural)

VIC
Financial and Consumer Rights Council:
03 9663 2000 or 1800 134 139
Credit Helpline: 03 9602 3800 or 1800 803 800

QLD
Lifeline Queensland - 07 3250 1900
Legal Aid Queensland - 1300 65 11 88

WA
Financial Counsellors Resource Project: 08 9221 9411
Consumer Credit Legal Service WA: 08 9221 7066
Financial Counsellor's Association of WA: 08 9325 1617

TAS
Anglicare Financial Counselling Service:
03 6234 3510 or 1800 243 232
Hobart Community Legal Service: 03 6223 2500
Tasmanian Credit Helpline: 1800 232 500

NT
Anglicare Northern Territory Financial Counselling
Service: 08 8985 0000 or 1800 898 500

SA
Uniting Care Wesley Adelaide Community Service:
08 8202 5180
Parra Districts Community Legal Service: 08 8281 6911
Dept of Family and Youth Services: 08 8226 7000

More tips & advice: www.fido.asic.gov.au
www.reachout.com.au

To the Max was produced by Streetwize Communications with funding from the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC). First published in May 2004. © ASIC. ISBN 1 876226 82 X. Thank you to all the young people and organisations who took part in the development of this resource.

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Writer: Libby Varcoe
Artist: Ross Carnsew
Project Manager: Jo Taylor

Streetwize Communications
Suite 6, 245 Chalmers St
Redfern NSW 2016
Australia

Tel: (612) 9319 0220 Fax: (612) 9319 5553 www.streetwize.com.au

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