

TEXT MESSAGING

September 2006

Text messaging, instant messaging by computer, is the fastest growing communication trend and is a quick and convenient way for kids to keep their friends posted. For parents, it is very challenging in at least two ways: knowing the lingo and knowing the cost. While it is very convenient, it also has some dangers, one of which is incredibly high cell phone bills if text messaging is not built into the contract or if kids don't stay within the message limit.

Kids prefer text messaging to actual talking. It's fast and quiet. You can send a quick message without the commitment of a phone call, which will take longer. There is far more privacy with text messaging, since many parents can't read that language. It lets you chat without being noticed and without interrupting.

Some of the problems that text messaging can lead to are: a temptation to send a quick message in school; send answers to a test, stay up late and flirt with someone who is "hot." And that's where some strict rules come in; parents need to become text message literate, establish good parent-to-child communication, and consider text messaging themselves to be up on the trend! Following are some additional smart rules:

- Respect the plan. If your child goes over the text messaging allotment, require him/her to pay for the overages.
- Set a nighttime text message curfew.
- No text messaging at the dinner table.
- No text messaging in church
- No text messaging in school.
- Parents communication-in whatever form-always take precedence over someone's text message.
- Be careful who you give your screen name to if you use instant messaging services such as AOL. Cell phones can be hit by spam, viruses and predators.

There's a new trend popular among teenage chatters, and your filters won't pick up any of it. It's called l33tspeak, netspeak or just plain internet slang (leet speak from the word elite). You know what I'm talking about. Acronyms like lol wtf bbiab and nm. Today's kids are also lazy, and use single letter words: U replaces you, R replaces are, o replaces oh, m replaces am etc...

Less popular, but still widely used (especially in games) is true l33tspeak, which involves using numbers instead of letters. 4 replaces A, 3 replaces E, 7 replaces T, 1 replaces L, and \$ replaces S. These are just a few examples, some of it is worse, like /\ / and /\ \ , or 13 instead of B.

If you're concerned about your kids, it's absolutely crucial you learn to understand their language. Your filters may pick up porn, but do they catch the word "pron"? What about warez, which is short for illegally obtained software.

Another key phrase is the word *paw*, short for "parents are watching" or *pos* for "parents over shoulder." Learn to recognize the warning signs and find out what they're doing that they don't want you to know about.

If you want to know what your kids are saying and doing, you've got to know the text messaging code. If you wish to see the more explicit codes and less polite ones, please use the Internet sites: www.wikipedia.org or www.noslang.com.

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| 404-I don't know | ILU or ILY-I love you | SIT-Stay in touch |
| AML-All my love | IMHO-In my humble opinion | SLAP-Sounds like a plan |
| AOTA-All of the above | IMNSHO-In my not so humble opinion | SMHID-Scratching my head in disbelief |
| A/S/L-Age/sex/location | ISM-I'm sorry | SO-Significant other |
| ATM-At the moment | JAS-Just a sec | SOL-Sooner or later or simply out of luck |
| AYOR-At your own risk | JJA-Just joking around | SOMY-Sick of me yet? |
| B/F-Boyfriend | JTUMLTk-Just thought you might like to know | SOTMG-Short of time, must go |
| B4-Before | LHO-Laughing head off | SPST-Same place, same time |
| B4N-Bye for now | LOFLOL-Lying on floor laughing out loud | SRY-Sorry |
| BC-Because | LOL-Laughing out loud | SS-So sorry |
| BOL-Best of luck | LSHIH-Laughing so hard it hurts | SSDD-Same stuff, different day |
| BML-Biting my lip | MTF-More to follow | SSINF-So stupid it's not funny |
| BTW-By the way | MTFBWU-May the force be with you | STBID-Sometime before I die |
| BWL-Bursting with laughter | MYOB-Mind your own business | SUITM-See you in the morning |
| CMON-Come on | NP-No problem | SUP-What's up? |
| CUA-See you around | NOOB-Newbie | SYUTH-Slap you upside the head |
| CUL8R-See you later | NW-No way | SYWWTBY-See ya, wouldn't want to be ya |
| CYA-See ya! | OMG-Oh my God | T+-Think positive |
| DEGT-Don't even go there | OTTOMH-Off the top of my head | TA-Thanks a lot |
| Dnt B L8-Don't be late | PCM-Please call me | TAFN-That's all for now |
| EG-Evil grin | POAHF-Put on a happy face | TAFN-That's all for now |
| EOM-End of message | PSB-Pretty stupid boy | TBH-To be honest |
| F2F-Face to face | PSG-Pretty stupid girl | TC-Take care |
| FBM-Fine by me | PXT-Please explain that | TMWFI-Take my word for it |
| FOCL-Falling off chair laughing | QT-Cutie | TTFN-Ta ta for now |
| FWIW-For what it's worth | RAS-Running around screaming | TTTT-These things take time |
| FYI-For your information | REHI-Hello again | TU or TY-Thank you |
| G/F-Girlfriend | RL-Real life | UGTBK-You've got to be kidding |
| GA-Go ahead | RME-Rolling my eyes | WAM-Wait a minute |
| GAL-Get a life | ROTFLSTC-Rolling on the floor laughing scaring the cat | WEG-Wicked evil grin |
| GB-Goodbye | RUOK-Are you okay? | WTV-Watching TV |
| GBU-God bless you | SAL-Such a laugh | WUWT-What's up with that? |
| GIAR-Give it a rest | SC-Stay cool | YBS-You'll be sorry |
| GOI-Get over it | SETE-Smiling ear to ear | YGB-You go, boy |
| GTG-Got to go | SICNR-Sorry, I couldn't resist | YGG-You go girl |
| HAGN-Have a good night | SIG2R-Sorry, I got to run | YGTBK-You've got to be kidding |
| HAGO-Have a good one | SIS-Snickering in silence | YIAH-Yes, I am here |
| HHIS-Hanging head in shame | | YYSSW-Yeah yeah, sure sure whatever |
| HHOK-Ha ha, only kidding | | ZZZ-Sleeping |
| HRU-How are you | | |
| IB-I'm back | | |
| ICBW-It could be worse | | |
| IDK-I don't know | | |
| IDTS-I don't think so | | |