

PARENTS.

THE ANTI-DRUG.

Need some helpful tips on how to monitor your teen's IM account?

- ① Ask your teen if she has an IM account. If she does, inquire about who's on her "buddy list." If there are a number of people on her list who she does not personally know – or who you do not know – then go through with her and purge the list.
- ② Set up privacy or security settings to block strangers from Instant Messaging or e-mailing your teen. Your Internet Service Provider (ISP) can assist you.
- ③ Ask your teen to give you his log-in information and tell him why you would like to have it. This is not an issue of privacy, but rather of safety. Set some ground rules with your teen and establish under what circumstances you would be inclined to check his IM account.
- ④ Learn Internet lingo. Teens can be clever and have a laundry list of abbreviations they use to communicate to each other without your knowledge. Become more familiar with these abbreviated terms, as well as the ones they use to talk about risky behaviors, such as drug or alcohol use.
- ⑤ Set up your own IM account. Most services are free and easy to use. And you'll be even more connected to your teen in their digital world.

INTERNET LINGO AND TERMS

GIF, RSVP or even ASAP may sound familiar; however as computers have transformed communications a new dialect has emerged: Internet lingo. Acronyms or character symbols called Emoticons (mixing symbols to express emotions or moods) enable teens to communicate with others in a few keystrokes.

While often just a convenient and quick means of communication, many teens use these acronyms and symbols to warn their friends when parents might be present and even to discuss drug use in a code that parents can't decipher.

Instant messages, blog entries and text messages often look like Sanskrit to parents, but decoding this lingo used in digital communications is an important monitoring skill that should not be overlooked. Here is a quick guide to help you translate what teens are saying online and in their cell phone text messages. Keep in mind that, as with street names for drugs, these symbols and acronyms are subject to frequent change, particularly when those who use them suspect that others have figured out what they mean.

Lingo to Warn of Parental Monitoring⁽¹⁾

POS Parent Over Shoulder

PIR Parent In Room

P911 Parent Alert

PAW Parents Are Watching

PAL Parents Are Listening

KPC Keeping Parents Clueless

Internet Lingo of Social or Sexual Nature⁽²⁾

WYCM Will You Call Me?

ASL Age/Sex/Location

MorF Male or Female

KFY Kiss For You

MOOS Member(s) Of the Opposite Sex

ADR Address

LMIRL Let's Meet In Real Life

HAK Hugs And Kisses

ILU or ILY I Love You

KOTL Kiss On The Lips

SMIM Send Me an Instant Message

SMEM Send Me an E-Mail
WUF Where Are You From?
WYRN What's Your Real Name?

Emoticons(3)

;) Winking
:*(Crying
#-) Wiped out, partied all night
%*} Inebriated
%\ Hangover
8-# Death
;-d~ Heavy smoker
:->< Puckered up to kiss
:/i No smoking

Drug Lingo

Similar to Internet lingo, drug nomenclature can be cryptic. Parents can monitor for drug use by learning popular drug lingo and asking questions. A few examples of popular drug lingo are listed below; a database containing more than 2,300 street terms is also available.

Marijuana Lingo

Pot Marijuana
Weed Marijuana
Bud Marijuana
Kind Bud An expensive and potent strain of marijuana
Mary Jane Marijuana
Ganja Marijuana
Blunt Marijuana rolled into a Philly Blunt or similar type of cigar
Bong A large water filtered pipe for smoking marijuana

Prescription Drug

- Pharming Raiding medical cabinets to trade and consume prescription drugs to get high
- Robotripping Drinking cough medicine to get high (comes from the brand name Robotussin)
- Lean Drinking prescription cough syrup mixed with painkillers and soda
- O Oxycontin
- Tweaking High on amphetamines
- Blue Snorting Adderall or Ritalin
- Boogers

1. "The NetLingo Top 20 Internet Acronyms Every Parent Needs to Know." NetLingo.com; 2006.
2. Ibid.
3. "Emoticons." Computeruser.com; 2006.

BE P.E.S.T.S.



PROTECT YOUR KIDS. Children often don't recognize the risks that go along with Internet use. Talk with your child about these risks. Let her know it's OK to come to you if something happens online that makes her uncomfortable.

ESTABLISH GUIDELINES FOR COMPUTER USE AND ONLINE TIME. Limit computer time as you would time spent in front of the TV. Discuss which sites are acceptable and which ones are not. Have the computer setup in a public place—NOT your child's bedroom.

SECURE ALL PERSONAL OR PRIVATE INFORMATION. Make sure children understand they should NEVER give out ANY personal information online; NEVER to use their real name as part of an email address; and NEVER answer questions from someone they (and ideally, you) have not met in person.

TOLERATE NO EXCUSES OR RATIONALIZATIONS. Being online feels safe and comfortable to your child. Let him know that computer rules are not up for ongoing negotiation. You've established these rules to keep your child safe—"giving in" when it comes to the Internet could place him at risk.

SNOOP EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE. Let your child know that you will be checking her online activities (including myspace pages and email) from time to time. Explain that you are not doing this to invade her privacy, but because you need to be sure that she is safe.

Try these websites for more information on Internet safety:

- ▶ [Netsmartz.com](http://netsmartz.com)
- ▶ theantidrug.com
- ▶ isafe.org
- ▶ noslang.com

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DIGITAL MONITORING RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

More than one in five (22%) 13-17 year olds said their parents or guardians have never discussed Internet safety with them.¹

Many Web sites offer guidance and advice on how to monitor your teen in the Digital Age. While *TheAntiDrug.com* provides basic steps on how to monitor certain technologies, other sites offer more specific details. Below is a list of credible, user-friendly sites that can provide you with more information.

Sites for Parents

American Academy of Pediatrics

The AAP Web site contains comprehensive media information for parents including entertainment rating systems, media guidelines for parents, and advice on setting rules for Internet usage.

Cable in the Classroom

Cable in the Classroom (CIC) fosters the use of cable content and technology to expand and enhance learning for children and youth nationwide. Working in partnership with and on behalf of the cable industry, CIC advocates for the visionary, sensible and effective use of media in homes, schools, and communities.

i-SAFE, Inc.

i-SAFE, Inc. is a worldwide leader in Internet safety education. Endorsed by Congress, i-SAFE is a non-profit foundation dedicated to protecting the online experiences of youth everywhere. i-SAFE incorporates classroom curriculum with dynamic community outreach to empower students, teachers, parents, law enforcement, and concerned adults to make the Internet a safer place.

National Institute on Media and the Family

The National Institute on Media and the Family is a non-profit, national resource center for research, information and education about the impact of the media on children, and families.

PTA

The PTA offers tips for parents on how to monitor teen Web use and advice for dealing with potential dangers on the Internet.

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's® (NCMEC) mission is to help prevent child abduction and sexual exploitation; help find missing children; and assist victims of child abduction and sexual exploitation, their families, and the professionals who serve them. Among their many activities, NCMEC also operates a CyberTipline that the public may use to report Internet-related child sexual exploitation.

NetFamilyNews

NetFamily News is based on the premise that informed, engaged parenting is essential to kids' constructive use of technology and the Net. This non-profit public service provides a forum and "kid-tech news" to help parents and educators stay current on popular technologies among teens.

NetSmartz & NetSmartz Teens

NetSmartz Teens uses interactive tools to teach teens how to be safer on the Internet. The site includes real-life stories, activities, and online games.

PC-Turnoff

This group of concerned parents established PC-Turnoff Week to encourage other parents to turn off their children's computer for one whole week during the summer. The organization also provides materials and a newsletter.

ProtectKids.com

Enough Is Enough, the parent organization of ProtectKids.com, is a national non-profit whose mission is to make the Internet safer for children and families. ProtectKids.com is the sister site to the official EIE site, and offers tools to help parents protect their teens, with special emphasis on teen girls, from Internet dangers.

StaySafe.org

This non-profit organization provides information for parents, caregivers and teens on Internet safety. It also has an interactive tutorial, a virtual community, and educational games.

Wired Safety

WiredSafety is the largest online safety, education, and help group in the world. It is a cyber-neighborhood watch that operates worldwide in cyberspace through more than 9,000 volunteers.

Sites for Teens

Web Wise Kids

Since 2002, Web Wise Kids, a non-profit organization, has been committed to teaching children and their caregivers strategies for safe Internet use, including methods of detecting and deterring online predators.

Kids Health

KidsHealth.org is targeted at kids and discusses a variety of health issues, from how to deal with feelings to how to safely surf the Net.

Net Smartz Kids

Net Smartz Kids uses interactive tools to teach young people how to recognize dangers and increase self-confidence whenever they go online. The site includes games, puzzles, quizzes, and free downloads.

Wired Teens

This online community for 13- to 18-year-olds offers online safety classes, forums, and a weekly column designed to promote a safe online experience.

Visit "[Monitoring Tools](#)" for information on software and other technologies that can help you monitor your teen's online activities when you are not around.

Cox Communications press release, "New Study Reveals 14% of Teens Have Had Face-to-Face meetings with People They've Met on the Internet," May 11, 2006.