



Text Messaging

By Kyle Bosch -- November 15, 2008

Michelle Williams – mother of 2 teens says, “They’re constantly texting, when they’ve just seen that person, what, 5-10 minutes ago.”

Although technology has changed a lot – teenagers haven’t. In the past, kids would race home and get on the phone. Now they spend hours text messaging each other. And if they’re not using their cells, they may be online instant messaging.

Nick – age 13 says, “It’s kind of easier than just talking on the phone, it’s kind of faster, so you don’t have to call.”

Text and instant messaging, or IM, are here to stay, at least until some other new technology takes over. So what do parents need to know? Well first, don’t be afraid to use the technology yourself.

James Williams – father of 2 teens says, “As parents when you get involved with what kids do you find yourself using the same communication techniques to keep up with them... Lots of times that’s how we communicate when they’re in school or when I’m in a meeting or something.”

James points out that on many cell phone plans, texting is included at no charge, while calling can use expensive peak time minutes. But to text efficiently, it helps to know the lingo, which can bewilder some parents. James says, “Have you seen a text message?”

Michelle says, “There’s so many codes, IDK, what is IDK, its almost like you have to have a translator, to say what is IDK, I’m like write it out for me!”

Well “IDK” means I don’t know... a few other helpful translations for you... “LOL” stands for laughing out loud and is used kind of like a smiley face, to soften a statement, as in “I can’t believe you said that today – lol.” JK means just kidding, “BRB” means be right back, and “BFF” means best friends forever. Now, “POS” means parent over shoulder, and alerts the recipient that the teen can’t talk freely because a parent is watching.

Danny Huerta – counselor, Focus on the Family say, “They’ll throw 143 out there and that means I love you, 182 means I hate you, 420 would be marijuana.”

Parents can find a lot more information at sites like netlingo.com. And remind your kids that nothing will ever replace face-to-face interaction.

Michelle says, “You can better communicate just by looking at the person, talking to that person. I don’t think it can be a replacement.”