May 1, 2006 5:15 pm US/Central

# Online Lingo Aimed At Keeping Parents In The Dark

**WEB EXTRA:** Parents' Guide To Online Lingo

(CBS) CHICAGO You know it as online lingo -- that language used by kids for instant and text messaging.

Parents think they have it figured out, things like TTYL for "talk to you later" and LOL for "laughing out loud."

But now experts warn it's turned into a much more complicated, cryptic and potentially dangerous code of letters, numbers and symbols designed to keep you in the dark.

CBS 2's Antonio Mora explains how you can crack the code and protect your kids.

Sixteen-year-old Niles Jeran uses Internet slang, the online lingo that's so popular among teens. So do all his friends.

"I can see why parents would be worried just because it could, it can lead to danger," Jeran said.

And that's exactly why Internet safety experts are sounding a warning: this once innocent language is morphing into a dangerous dialect.

"There are too many predators out there that could endanger their kids' lives or could sexualize them too early by sending unwanted messages and pictures," said family therapist Barbara Melton.

Melton and Susan Shankle are family therapists who specialize in Internet issues. They say most parents are in the dark when it comes to this new jargon. They counseled one family whose young daughter started a steamy online affair right in front of them.

"While the mom was cooking dinner and the dad was watching television, the daughter, who was 11 at the time, was carrying on this conversation with this older man," Shankle said.

Even though her parents constantly checked the IM messages, the conversations were simply foreign to the parents. NIFOC is one of the terms they will sometimes use and it means "naked in front of computer." Then there's KPC for "keeping parents clueless," POS for "parent over the shoulder," and GYPO for "get your pants off."

And TDTM "...literally means 'talk dirty to me.' If you see that on your child's screen they're talking to somebody they shouldn't be," said Al Kush at WiredSafety.org.

Experts urge parents to learn this language. There are several online dictionaries and translators to help, like the one at teenangels.org or at netlingo.com.

"At least become familiar with it. Know it's there," Kush said.

There is software that can send you a transcript of your kids' web chats, but if you don't know the lingo you'll still be, well as they say, clueless.

As always, experts say you should keep your computer in a common area and monitor how much time your kids spend online.

It's also important to ask questions about what your kids are up to and who they're talking to.

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- NetLingo.com
- TeenAngels.org
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