



## UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS BEING SENT AND RECEIVED IS CRITICAL!

Because of the real-time communication capabilities of the Internet, new forms of written language have developed. If you understand the basics of this language, you will better understand the conversations in which your children engage.

The lingo (language) used to send text messages consists of many shortcuts which appear as acronyms and/or symbols that, to the uninitiated, can be incomprehensible (like f U do not undRstNd DIS sNteNc U nEd 2 Lern txt lingo). There are obvious risks here, from the potential danger or embarrassment of responding inappropriately, to a message you do not fully understand, to not being aware of what your child is sending or reading. It is vital that parents learn the basics of text messaging.



## EMOTICONS

Getting along as a netizen (InterNet Citizen) does not stop with etiquette. Because it is often difficult to convey emotion, intent, or tone through text alone, early Internet users invented *emoticons*, which are virtual facial expressions made from basic keyboard characters, like the colon and right parentheses (Just remember to rotate your head left about 90 degrees in order to understand them!)

Here are some examples of commonly used emoticons:

- :-) Happy or joking
- :-o Surprised or concerned
- ;-) Winking
- :-x Not saying anything
- :-( Unhappy
- :-p Sticking out your tongue (usually in fun)



## ONLINE ACRONYMS

Because typing takes longer than speaking, savvy netizens like to reduce common phrases to a few simple letters.

Here are some commonly used acronym examples:

- LOL (Laughing out loud)
- CTN (Can't talk now)
- OIC (Oh, I see)
- P911 (Parents are watching)
- CUL (See you later)
- TIA (Thanks in advance)
- BBL (Be back later)
- J/K (Just kidding)
- IMHO (In my humble opinion)
- A/S/L (What's your age/sex/location?)

**T.E.S.T.**