

# Can You Read Your Child's Text Messages?

Sixty percent of kids 17 and under send text messages. It is how they keep in touch with friends. Kids text message online or by phone. Texting is:

- A fast and easy way to talk to friends.
- Much faster than typing words and sentences.
- Another language.
- A fun activity to pass the time.
- A daily activity for most kids.

Text messages contain letters, numbers, signs and punctuation marks. These written messages make sense to kids. However, 95% of parents do not know the text lingo. Teens like texting with friends without parents knowing what they are saying.

With texting, kids can:

- Bully others,
- Come in contact with unknown, possibly harmful, people, and
- send photos that may hurt them or others.

One of a parent's many roles is to keep kids safe. You should know:

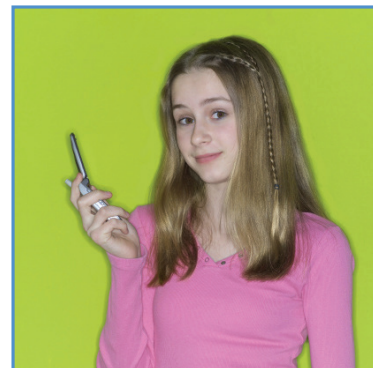
- Who text messages with your child,
- What the message means, and
- How many text messages your child sends. Check your cell phone bill.

Parents can search the Internet for help. Visit [webopedia.com](http://webopedia.com) and [txtdrop.com](http://txtdrop.com).

Examples include:

- 182 – I hate you.
- 143 – I love you.
- CD9 – Parents are around.
- 420 – Marijuana.
- GTG - Got to go.
- KPC – Keeping parents clueless.
- MOS - Mom over shoulder.
- DOS - Dad over shoulder.
- P911 – Parent alert.
- LMIRL – Let's meet in real life.
- PAL – Parents are listening.
- PAW – Parents are watching.
- RU/18 – Are you over 18?
- ZERG – To gang up on someone.
- 4AO -- For adults only
- 7K -- Sick
- 6Y -- Sexy
- RME -- Rolling my eyes

Parent can monitor their child's text messages through a monitoring app or program. Search the Internet for a program that fits your needs.



*Brought to you by Parent Help Line at HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital  
to help keep kids safe, healthy and happy.*



**Call the Parent Help Line. Help is just a phone call away.**

1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889  
10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week  
[www.parenthelpline.org](http://www.parenthelpline.org)

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