

## **Blogging: A Primer for Parents**

A “blog” is a web site for which a person or group of people generates text, photos, video, audio files and/or links on a regular basis. Many people treat their “blog” or “web log” as an diary or journal accessible by the public.

Blogger: Person who posts entries on the web site

Blogging: The act of adding more text to the web site.

Blog posts, posts or entries: Individual articles on the web site.

Nearly 60 percent of online teens create content for the internet, according to a recent study by the non-partisan Pew Research Center.

Many blogs include the names, photographs, e-mail addresses and birth dates of their authors as well as their instant messaging (IM) screen names. This allows anyone – from peers to parents to strangers – to search for a person online then view photographs and read the intimate details of a student’s life online. LiveJournal, one popular blog community, allows subscriber to search for bloggers by their city, age and interests. Experts warn that information – some of it embarrassing or incriminating – may be parked online permanently and be found decades later when a potential employer checks the background of a student.

### **Experts recommend that internet users:**

- Treat everyone they meet online as if he were a stranger, even after they’ve traded information. Lying online is easy.
- Leave out identifying information like their name, where they work and go to school.
- Use e-mail addresses that don't use their name and can't be traced to their other online activity.
- When possible, protect their information with passwords.
- Obscure identities in pictures.
- Post only stuff they wouldn't mind seeing on a billboard.
- Team up with a buddy to check each other's sites for problems.
- Teens under 13 should only blog with constant supervision.

(Source: USA Today, Oct. 30, 2005)

### **Most popular web logs**

1. Boing Boing: A Directory of Wonderful Things ([www.boingboing.net](http://www.boingboing.net))
2. PostSecret ([postsecret.blogspot.com](http://postsecret.blogspot.com))
3. Engadget ([www.engadget.com](http://www.engadget.com))
4. Daily Kos: State of the Nation ([www.dailykos.com](http://www.dailykos.com))
5. The Huffington Post ([www.huffingtonpost.com](http://www.huffingtonpost.com))
6. Gizmodo: The Gadgets Weblog ([www.gizmodo.com](http://www.gizmodo.com))
7. Instapundit.com
8. MSN Space Toolbook v 2.0 ([spaces.msn.com/members/msntool](http://spaces.msn.com/members/msntool))
9. Dooce ([ww.dooce.com](http://ww.dooce.com))
10. Michelle Malkin ([michellemalkin.com](http://michellemalkin.com))

(Source: [www.technorati.com](http://www.technorati.com))