



CODE: The Language of Today's Youth by Joe Gandolfo

Recently, my wife – Tonya – came to me to show me something my 8 year old had written in school. It was a one page worksheet which had an open ended question; *I trust _____*. My 8 year old, Cole, filled in the blank with *my Dad.*

The worksheet required him to write three reasons why, and two of his reasons were that *“Dad keeps me safe”* and *“Dad would do me no harm”*. Heart-touched and humbled I quietly sat thinking that at least some of my efforts in parenting have had a positive impact.

Thru the counseling work that I have been doing over the last 17 years, I know that different kind of challenges lay ahead as both of my boys go thru their pre-teen and teen years. I am fully convinced that parents should not only reach out to one and another for support, but also need to let other parents know what is going on with the pre-teens and teens in the neighborhoods of today's world.

It is well known that today's pre-teens and teens use computers, pagers and cellphones to communicate with their friends. Instant messaging (IM) has become the popular choice and mode of communicating between friends. But there is something that is not as well known by parents.

So, from one parent to another I ask – *Do you know the “code”?* Today's youth IM by code, a type of shorthand using acronyms. Much of the codes are harmless, but some are revealing as well. ALL parents should be aware of the “code”, and below are some examples:

A/S/L – Age/Sex/Location
NIFOC – Naked In Front Of The Computer
POS – Parent Over Shoulder
QT – Cutie
AML – All My Love
BB4N – Bye Bye For Now
CUNS – See You In School
FF – Friends Forever
HAK – Hugs And Kisses
NBD – No Big Deal
RUUP4IT – Are You Up For It
RYO – Roll Your Own

Parenting pre-teens and teens can seem at times like visiting a foreign country, and we as parents can survive better in this foreign land if we at least know some of the language and customs. This “code” or NetLingo is the language of today’s pre-teens and teens.

Take some time to learn their language, if not to communicate with them, then at least to be aware of what they are IM’ing about and to potentially keep them safe. Believe it or not pre-teens and teens *still desire*, even if they will not admit it to you, for their parents to be involved in their life and to keep them safe. They have told me this much over and over in my office.

For more information go to <http://www.netlingo.com/emailsh.cfm>

Listen to Joe’s free daily podcast – ***Teen Success Radio*** – available on iTunes.
His new book ***The Greatest Teenage Myth in the World*** is now available @
www.JosephGandolfo.com or www.TheGreatestTeenageMythInTheWorld.com

Joe Gandolfo is on a mission to ***champion the greatest commodity in today's world – our youth, teenagers, young adults and college students***, and to rally, strengthen and energize the adults – parents, educators, mental health professionals and organizations - who work with and care about our greatest commodity in the world.

Joe works as a ***professional speaker, success coach, seminar leader motivational counselor and author***. He brings 20 years experience working with youth, teen-agers, student-athletes, professional athletes, adults, parents, educators, public and private schools, organizations and associations.

His clients have included: *Georgia Tech Athletic Association, Rockdale County Schools, Cobb County Schools, Cobb Teen Leadership, YMCA, Childcare Resource Network, University of Clemson, University of West Georgia, PGA of America, Milwaukee Brewers, Coca-Cola, SouthCoast Hospitals, Owens-Corning and MPI Georgia Chapter.*

He has been an adjunct professor at Georgia Tech (1996-2000) and Georgia State (2005-06). He was on staff at the Homer Rice Center for Sports Performance (2000-07). He has had a private consulting practice since 1991.

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