

Remember

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Kids today have grown up using digital devices and computers to communicate – they're comfortable with them and sometimes prefer them.

The key to learning how and when to use electronic communications is not to denigrate how kids use digital devices, but to emphasize that there are times and situations when it's best not to type, but to talk.



Dr. Elizabeth K.
Englander

Dr. Elizabeth K. Englander is a Professor of Psychology, and the founder and Director of the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center at Bridgewater State University in Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

She is a nationally recognized researcher and trainer in the field of childhood aggression, bullying and cyberbullying.

Dr. Englander has trained tens of thousands of teachers, students, and parent and community groups. She presents at many national conferences and is the author of dozens of journal articles and book chapters, including the book *Understanding violence.*

<http://www.elizabethenglander.com>
(508) 955-0272 Email: Bullyingbb@gmail.com
Elizabeth Englander, PhD, LLC
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Electronics Changes How We Talk: A Guide for Parents and Kids



**Elizabeth
Englander, PhD**



Texting isn't the same as talking

Most adults intuitively understand that there may be times or situations when it's more appropriate to have a face-to-face or phone conversation, but kids can have a tough time with this idea. They've grown up with electronics and often prefer that type of communication.

You may have noticed that relying on digital devices has impacted your children's social interactions and you may even feel that it's impacted their social skills. Despite that, once kids understand and are aware of how using devices can limit communication, they can begin to learn where and when to use more old-fashioned ways to talk.

What are the results of using electronics to communicate?



Digital Communications

- Are very fast
- Are very easy – no envelopes, stamps, or hassle
- Are quick and simple to distribute widely
- Don't always show us how someone is feeling, or what they're thinking.
- Can be misinterpreted very easily
- Can be distributed to other people *very* easily

If you have a feeling and multiple people text you about it, the feeling will become stronger and more noticeable to you. For example, if you're annoyed with a friend, texting with others about it could make you feel angrier – although talking about it in person might make you feel less angry.

Digitally, emotions are often inflated – both good and bad emotions.

Always using electronics can affect your social life and your relationships. It's harder to really connect with people unless you have some time face-to-face.

Because you can't see the person you're talking with, remember that it's very easy for misunderstandings to happen – both ways. Use emoticons so people know if you're joking, and don't be quick to jump to conclusions about what someone else is saying.

For sensitive issues and situations, it may feel awkward to talk to someone in person or on the phone, but it's often the best way to make sure that nothing is misunderstood.

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