

Staying Safe When Using Blogs

Texas Attorney General - <http://www.oag.state.tx.us/internet/parenttips.shtml>

A **blog** (short for Web Log) is a website of your own, where you enter information ordered by date. It's an online diary or online journal that is shared with others online. Talk to your child about blogging. Blogging can be a great creative writing exercise for your child. Just make sure they understand how to stay safe.

- **Blogs should not contain identifying information** that someone could use to locate the blogger or anyone he or she writes about.
- **Remind your child that once a blog is posted, it's out there.** You can take it down, but you can't take it back.
- **Think twice about who may be hurt by something written in a blog.** Some bloggers bully, slander, harass and intimidate others. Sometimes they simply have not thought about the effect their private thoughts could have on others when posted for all to read.
- **Some children have unintentionally revealed information about their families** that could lead to identity theft. Teach your child about [identity theft](#) and how to avoid it.
- **Help your child select an age-appropriate blog site** and make sure personal information is hidden from public view. As always, check privacy policies carefully.
- **Read your children's blogs!** Encourage their creative efforts. Children (like everyone else) are sensitive to criticism of their writing and respond readily to praise. You can guide them and protect them by being their number one reader and fan.

Visit www.missingkids.com for more tips on protecting your children.