

A GUIDE TO Teen Slang

Terms All Parents Should Know

Not all teen slang is bad - some of it is creative, fun, and even humorous! However, depending on context, some terms can be a bit of a concern and may even signal that your teen is dealing with serious issues or making major life decisions without your knowledge.

TEEN SLANG EVERYDAY TERMS



ATE

When your teen says someone "ate," they mean they **nailed it**. Whether it's a friend's outfit or a fantastic meal, "ate" is all about doing something really well.

EXAMPLE:
"Did you see her dress? She totally ate that up!"

BET

This one's easy. "Bet" is another way of saying "okay" or "sure." If you see your teen to class this morning and they reply with "bet," that's a good sign. They agree to do it.

EXAMPLE:
"Can you help me with the groceries?" "Bet!"

BUSSIN & GAS

Both these terms are compliments. If something is "bussin'" or "gas," it means it's really good or cool. Yet, teens use them for food metaphors.

EXAMPLE:
"This pizza is bussin'!"

CRINGE

Cringe is that feeling when something is just so awkward or embarrassing you can't help but react. Teens use it a lot when talking about moments or things they find super uncomfortable.

EXAMPLE:
"That movie was a bummer."

LOWKEY

This term is all about keeping things on the down low. When a teen says they "lowkey" want to do something, it means they're not too loud about it but still interested.

EXAMPLE:
"I lowkey want to go to that concert."

SLAY

If someone is "slaying," they're absolutely killing it, usually in how they look. It's all about looking fantastic and owning it.

EXAMPLE:
"You're slaying in that outfit!"

GREEN FLAG

Just like a green light means go, a "green flag" in someone means they have qualities worth cheering for. It's the opposite of a red flag and is definitely a good thing.

EXAMPLE:
"He's always so kind to everyone. That's green flag!"

MAIN CHARACTER ENERGY

If your teen talks about someone having "main character energy," they mean that person is living their life like they're the star of their own movie - confident and charismatic.

EXAMPLE:
"She walks in with such main character energy."

IT'S GIVING

When something or someone is "giving," it's a certain way your teen is using a trendy way to describe their energy or appearance. It's all about matching a vibe or looking on a new or feeling.

EXAMPLE:
"This room is giving cozy vibes."

GIRL DINNER & GIRL MATH

These are all about celebrating girl power in fun, quirky ways. A "girl dinner" is girl talk or a friend chat, and "girl math" could be a funny way to talk about making decisions. Both are lighthearted and positive.



TEEN SLANG TERMS THAT MIGHT RAISE EYEBROWS

DELULU

If someone's being "delulu," they're lost in their own world and not in a good way. It's about being unrealistic.

EXAMPLE:
"That guy he has 'Netflix star' status and a camera is kinda delulu."

ERA

Talking about being in a certain "era" is like saying they're going through a phase. It could be anything from "my aesthetic era" to "my heartbreak era." It's about expressing current feelings or stages in life.

NPC

This one's borrowed from video game language, meaning a non-playable character. If someone's called an "NPC," it might mean they're not making their own decisions or standing out much.

OPP

This term can be tricky. An "opp" could be someone admired from afar but could also have negative connotations if used to describe rivalry or dislike.

TEEN TERMS INDICATING CONCERNING BEHAVIOR



ICK

When someone or something suddenly turns off your teen, causing a strong feeling of disgust. It's worth checking in to understand what triggered this strong reaction.

TURNT UP

This could mean getting overly excited or involved in risky behaviors. If you hear this a lot, it might be time for a chat about safe limits.

FOMO

The term FOMO is an acronym for "Fear Of Missing Out" and can both point to struggles with social anxiety or relationship issues. These terms highlight the importance of open dialogue about online and offline relationships. In some cases, it can be used in a lighthearted way.

GHOSTED

When someone is ghosted, it means they've suddenly been cut off from communication with another person. For example, if two people are texting each other consistently and one of them suddenly stops for an extended period of time, they're ghosting the other.

STOP

SLANG TERMS WITH SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS

BODY COUNT

Referring to how many people someone has been intimate with. This term can be a red flag for discussions on self-worth and respect in relationships.

CANON EVENT

If a teen talks about a "canon event" shaping their life, it could mean a significant, sometimes traumatic, life event. Listening and discussing are key here.

420

A direct reference to marijuana. If this term pops up, it might be an opportunity to discuss substance use and its impacts.

NETFLIX & CHILL

What sounds like a cozy night in is often slang for hooking up. It's a good idea to talk about healthy relationships and consent if this term comes up.