

What's MySpace?

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Remember when staying in touch with friends meant dialing the phone to make a call or picking up a pen to write a letter? Now with a simple click of the mouse, you can invite all 50 of your “friends” to a party, post your favorite photos, share stories, ask for advice, and much more! How is this possible? With online social networking sites such as MySpace, Facebook, and LinkedIn!

With over 100 million registered users, MySpace and similar online social networking tools can be very convenient and fun, but many news reports also warn of the danger of these sites, especially for children and teens. Your Chippewa River District Library has many resources to help you better understand what they are, how they work, and how you can help make sure that you and your children are using them safely and effectively.

In “MySpace unraveled: a parent's guide to teen social networking”, authors Larry Magid and Anne Collier step you through how to set up a MySpace account and manage an online social life as well as showing parents how they can guide teens as they navigate the social Web. “Generation MySpace: helping your teen survive online adolescence” by Candice M. Kelsey gives practical advice for protecting your teen from the dangers of sexual predators and cyber-bullying in the online social networking environment.

In addition to online social networking sites, there are many other ways for people to coalesce, collaborate and contribute in an online environment. Blogs, short for weblogs, are Web sites that contain brief entries created by just one author or done collaboratively by a community of authors about a particular topic or group, such as favorite mystery novels or a

knitting club. Andy Wibbels describes how to use blogs for marketing in “Blogwild!: a guide for small business blogging”. “Extraordinary blogs and e-zines” by Lynne Rominger will have you impressing your friends and customers with creative and timely blogs and email magazines.

Perhaps you’ve seen your kids using “Wikipedia”, a worldwide encyclopedia, and wondered how that enormous wealth of information got online. Wikis are yet another form of online networking where people like you and me can sign in and contribute our expertise to a community project such as Wikipedia. Wikis have been used in classrooms, support groups, businesses, libraries and many more situations where group members want to share knowledge.

If you want to learn more, or want some hands on experience with MySpace, blogs, and wikis, be sure to sign up for the *What’s MySpace?* computer class on April 29 at 2:00pm. Other April computer classes to help you get the most from your Internet experience include Online Magazines on April 21 at 1:00pm and Online Shopping on April 22 at 6:30pm. If you want to get away from the computer and try something different, take a look at our Events calendar at www.crdl.org or become our MySpace friend at www.myspace.com/crdl and get a complete listing of library programs.