

Blogs, Wikis, and RSS

Using 2.0 Technology with Teens

What Are Blogs, Wikis, and RSS?

Blogs, wikis, and RSS are Web 2.0 tools. Think of Web 2.0 as a “read/write environment” rather than “read only.” It is characterized by tools that invite participation, content creation, and sharing. Creators of blogs and wikis can generally determine privacy settings as well as choose who can post or edit.

What is a blog?



A web log (or blog) is a website that contains chronologically arranged postings which typically look like diary entries, announcements, news, or commentary - depending on the purpose of the blog. Blogging allows interaction from readers in the form of comments. Blogs can also utilize tags which allow readers to track their favorite blog posts.

What is a wiki?

A wiki is website that can be collaboratively authored and edited. The most famous wiki is [Wikipedia](#), but wikis can be used to great advantage on a smaller scale as well.

What is RSS?

RSS (Really Simple Syndication) is a handy way to make information come to YOU. It’s an XML file format that allows content to be distributed to those who subscribe to it.

When you see one of [these icons](#) -   - or terms like “syndicate this site,” you’ll know you can subscribe! You view your subscriptions using a content aggregator, also called a news reader.

Why do librarians need to know about blogs, wikis, and RSS?

Blogs and wikis give libraries new ways to market and deliver their services, and to incorporate user feedback and participation. RSS allows librarians to stay up to date and to push the latest information about library services out to teens and other library users.

How are libraries using blogs, wikis and RSS?

Libraries use blogs as newsy “house organs” (like newsletters), to host programming and teaching activities (e.g., book discussions), or even in lieu of traditional websites.

Libraries use wikis for any project in which more heads are better than one. Wikis can be used to host student-created pathfinders and projects, teen-written book reviews, library documentation or policies, and guides to whatever!

RSS is a great way to keep up-to-date in the field and filter information by subscribing to blog feeds. It brings the gift of

serendipity - you find out things you didn’t know you wanted to know! RSS can be used to “push” information to your audience by embedding feeds on your website. Share news, automatically update new book lists, and feature teen-interest content.

Free or low-cost blogging services:

- [Blogger.com](#)
- [Blogmeister](#) (from David Warlick)
- [Edublogs.org](#) (for educators)
- [Livejournal.com](#)
- [WordPress](#) (for local hosting)

Free or low-cost wiki services:

- [PBwiki](#)
- [Wikispaces](#)
- [MediaWiki](#)
- [WikiMatrix](#), a tool to compare the features of wiki services and software

RSS aggregators:

- [Bloglines](#)
- [Google Reader](#)

Bloglines and Google Reader are “RSS for regular people”—they’re server based, so you can get to your feeds from anywhere.

Where to go for more information

- [RSS in Plain English](#)
- [Wikis in Plain English](#)
- [Blogging Libraries Wiki](#)
- [Library Success: A Best Practices Wiki](#) (particularly the section called 2.0 Library Services to Teens)
- [TeenLibWiki](#), for librarians serving teens
- [Teacher Librarian Wiki](#)
- [RSS tutorial from betterdays](#)
- [YALSA blog](#)
- [YALSA’s Social Networking Toolkit \(PDF\)](#)