

Keeping Up with Apps and Parental Tools: Resource and Guide Packet



THE PURPOSE OF THIS PACKET

Follow the Sequence

Online safety settings on devices, accounts, apps, and 3rd party services can interconnect. We suggest starting from the beginning of this packet with settings tied to devices. Some of those settings will then filter down and minimize how involved later steps are.

A Few Quick Tips

- Search Youtube and sort by "upload date" to find up-to-date video walk-throughs of parental settings.
- Apps that have no effective parental settings, like Snapchat, can sometimes be monitored with 3rd party parental apps, like Bark.
- Every step counts! Online safety is not all or nothing, so even one change starts to increase safety.

CONTENTS

1 - Parental Tools Connected to Devices

Beginning with the tools built into devices' operating system is the best foundation for online safety. These tools are steadily becoming more capable. For example, Screen Time for Mac and iOS has many features similar to paid online safety apps.

2 - Parental Tools for Popular Apps

Tools within individual apps sometimes offer the most precise settings, while other apps have no parental tools, or settings that cannot be locked and therefore kids can easily reverse them. We've included a breakdown of several major apps, what to look out for, what settings exist, and links to complete guides.

3 - Parental Tools for Video Streaming

Video streaming takes a variety of forms. The more common services like Youtube or Twitch allow for various parental settings. Sites like Omegle, that are designed for streaming live with strangers, pose serious risks to children that are only prevented by blocking access to the site using other tools.

4 - Additional Resources and guides






Our additional resources include links to reviews of third party online safety apps, as well as links to some top sources of app and media reviews and safety setting guides. For apps and questions not covered in the first three charts, check out this page.

Parental Tools Connected to Devices

Viewing a printed version?
Scan here to access all links









The parental tools built into devices are becoming better over time, and by setting these first, you reduce the additional steps that follow. The below chart will help you understand where particular settings apply and what features they include.

| | SETTINGS CAN CONNECT TO: | AVAILABLE FEATURES | LINKS |
|---|--|---|---|
| <p>MAC/iOS - SCREENTIME</p>  | <p>Mac computers iOS mobile devices</p> | <p>Activity reports and location sharing Limits on screen time, apps, communication Content and privacy restrictions Apps to "always allow" Communication safety (nudity detection)</p> | <p>Use Screen Time</p> <p>Video: Set Up Screen Time</p> |
| <p>GOOGLE/ANDROID FAMILY LINK</p>  | <p>Android devices Chromebooks Youtube Kids Google browser on any operating system(when logged in)</p> | <p>Activity Reports and location sharing Limits on screen time, apps, device usage Content restrictions Search and browser filters Turn off app notifications</p> | <p>Getting Started with Family Link</p> <p>Manage Your Child's Google Account</p> |
| <p>WINDOWS/XBOX MICROSOFT FAMILY GROUPS</p>  | <p>Windows computers and mobile devices Xbox Xbox Family Settings App Devices using Microsoft Edge</p> | <p>Activity reports and location sharing Content filters Limits on screen time, apps, communication Xbox: screen time, spending limits, review friend requests and interactions</p> | <p>Getting Started with Microsoft Family Safety</p> |
| <p>PLAYSTATION FAMILY ACCOUNT</p>  | <p>PS4 Console PS5 Console</p> | <p>Manage play time, spending, app and video access, and communication Block user-generated content</p> | <p>Set Parental Controls for PS4</p> <p>Set Parental Controls for PS5</p> |
| <p>NINTENDO</p>  | <p>(Set individually) Nintendo Switch Nintendo 3DS systems</p> | <p>Limits on game time and access Limits to in-game interaction and sharing to social media</p> | <p>Nintendo Parental Controls Crash Course</p> |

Parental Tools for Popular Apps







● Settings cannot be locked and therefore can be reversed by kids

Online safety settings on devices, accounts, apps, and 3rd party services can interconnect. We suggest starting from the beginning of this packet with settings in devices and operating systems. Some of those settings will filter down and minimize how complex the process is.

| | MAIN PURPOSE | COMPATIBLE WITH/ACCESSED BY | SAFETY CONCERNS | PARENTAL TOOLS | LINKS |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| KIK  | Texting, photo and video sharing | iOS and Android | Interaction w/ strangers No Parental Tools Documented criminal cases in connection | None except preventing access | Use settings within devices KIK's Guide for Parents |
| DISCORD  | Texting, audio and video w/in user-made groups | Windows, Mac, and Linux Computers iOS and Android Website | Interaction w/ strangers Possible exposure to explicit content | Scan and delete explicit content Who can message Who can friend request | Four Steps to a Safer Account Age Restricted Content |
| INSTAGRAM  | Image and Video Sharing | iOS and Android Website | Interaction w/ strangers Documented mental health impact Adult themes | Monitor usage, contacts, and privacy Comment filtering Time limits ● | Instagram Supervision Overview Instagram Family Center |
| TIKTOK  | Personalized feed of short clips Messaging and commenting | iOS and Android Website | Addictive element Suggestive content and challenges Potential exposure to explicit | Account privacy level Who and how can interact Content filtering | Video: How to Set Parental Tools TikTok Privacy Controls |
| SNAPCHAT  | Texting, audio, photo, and video w/ automatic "deletion" | iOS and Android | Popular for explicit use Kids' false comfort Stranger interaction Location sharing | Privacy level ● GPS on/off Content filtering Contacts Monitoring | Internet Matters Guide Snapchat Safety Center |
| WHISPER  | Anonymous posting and texting with nearby strangers | iOS and Android | Adult themes & images ONLY interact with strangers Designed to communicate nearby | None except preventing access | Use settings within devices Common Sense Media Review |

Parental Tools for Live & Video Streaming

Video streaming services like Netflix, Hulu, and Prime Video pose less risks to children because they do not include live-streaming or person-to-person interaction. With oversight, platforms like Youtube Live and Twitch can be used by some teens, but platforms like Omegle have no safe use for kids.

| | MAIN PURPOSE | COMPATIBLE WITH/ACCESSED BY | SAFETY CONCERNS | PARENTAL TOOLS | LINKS |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| YOUTUBE  | Watch and post live and recorded videos and interact with others | Web browser iOS and Android Gaming systems Smart TVs | Exposure to inappropriate content "Kids" content not always appropriate Interaction with strangers | Family Link App Content Restrictions | Youtube and Youtube Kids Options |
| TWITCH  | Livestream gaming and discussions | Web browser iOS and Android Gaming systems Smart TVs | Interaction w/ strangers Exposure to inappropriate content Large number of adults | Limits to chatting, adult content, and purchases Social Media posting | Internet Matters Guide Twitch Safety Center |
| OMEGLE  | Video chat with strangers worldwide | Web browser iOS and Android | Unsolicited nudity Adults seeking sexual interaction Screen-recordings posted online | None except blocking access to site/app | Use settings within devices and: Parental Settings in Web Browsers Settings in Search Engines |
| NETFLIX  | On-demand movies and tv | Web browser iOS and Android Gaming systems Smart TVs | Exposure to inappropriate content | Age-based content restrictions Kids' profiles | Parental Controls on Netflix |
| HULU  | Live and on-demand movies and tv | Web browser iOS and Android Gaming systems Smart TVs | Exposure to inappropriate content | Limit kids to up to PG-13/14 ratings | Kids' Profiles and Parental Tools on Hulu |
| AMAZON PRIME VIDEO  | On-demand movies and tv | Web browser iOS and Android Gaming systems Smart TVs | Exposure to inappropriate content | Age-based content restrictions | Parental Controls on Prime Video |

Additional Resources for Online Safety and Parental Tool Guides

PARENTAL SETTINGS APP COMPARISONS FOR 2022

Free Parental Settings Apps

For a guide to free apps (or free versions of apps), Techradar offers a good [overview of the options](#).

Paid Parental Settings apps

For paid 3rd party apps, Safewise' [buying guide](#) provides great information on some of the main options.

PARENTAL SETTING, ONLINE SAFETY, AND DIGITAL WELLBEING GUIDES

Internet Matters

Internet Matters is one of the best resources for parents. With extensive guides to every aspect of online safety settings, as well resources for general online wellbeing. Parents can sort information by issues, such as sexting, by age range, and by device/app type. Note that Internet Matters is based in the U.K. so their resources for schools may be less relevant.

Recommended Resource: [My Family's Digital Toolkit](#)
[App Minimum Age Guide](#)

Connect Safely

Connect Safely is a nonprofit providing online safety tools and resources. While their range of guides is not as extensive as some others', they release helpful podcasts and have a great Vimeo series for parents and teens.

Recommended Resource: [Ask Me Anything Video Series](#)

MEDIA AND APP REVIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Common Sense Media

Common Sense Media is a nonprofit that provides media and technology recommendations for families. In addition to application and settings guides, they offer extensive reviews of popular media in order to help guide parents' decisions. A free account only allows you to access 3 reviews per month, but a \$3/month subscription provides unlimited reviews and the ability to customize what content you get to match your kid's age and needs.

Recommended Resource: [Searchable Library of Expert Reviews](#)