

TIPS

TOP 10 PARENTAL CONTROL APPS

In a society where electronic devices play a big role in daily life, children are more and more likely to be exposed to content that is inappropriate and potentially harmful. Cell phones, tablets, computers, and online games all provide children with entertainment and even virtual socialization; however, they can also lead to the exposure to inappropriate content and the development of unhealthy habits. Parents cannot be with their children 24/7 to monitor every interaction their child has with electronic devices; however, new technology has made it possible for parents to monitor and control what is played on tablets, what their child has access to on the internet, and even how long their child can use an app, game, or device.

MONITORING & CONTROLLING CONTENT

Monitoring and controlling content on electronic devices is one of the major ways parents can keep their children safe from negative influences and inappropriate content. APPs can report concerns regarding cyberbullying through texts and social media, access to pornography, potential predatory messages, and red flags for issues with mental health or suicide. Parents can also use APPs to control the content that is seen on a device. By blocking specific social media websites, violent games, and pornographic websites, parents can feel more confident that their children are having a safe, fun, and productive virtual experience. See below for popular APPs specific to monitoring device content.



BARK

According to its site, “Bark’s affordable, award-winning service proactively monitors text messages, YouTube, emails, and 24 different social networks for potential safety concerns, so busy parents can save time and gain peace of mind.”

Works on iOS, Android, and Amazon mobile devices

<https://www.bark.us/>

MANAGING SCREEN TIME

In addition to monitoring and controlling the inappropriate content on electronic devices, it is also important for parents to understand how unlimited screen time can negatively affect their child. The American Society of Pediatrics reports that kids spend an average of seven hours a day on electronic devices. Cutting down on screen time has numerous physical, social, and behavioral benefits that include improved sleep, decreased body mass index, improved grades, and improved interaction with friends and family. It is recommended that children two and older be limited to an hour to two hours of electronic device usage per day, with children under two years old having no access to electronic devices. Parents can use APPs to control screen time on devices or individual websites and games to ensure children are not exceeding agreed upon time limits. See below for popular APPs that provide the ability to control screen time in addition to monitoring and controlling content.



SAFERKID TEXT MONITORING APP

The SaferKid Text Monitoring App allows parents access to text message and web browsing history, the ability to block potentially dangerous or inappropriate content, and limit screen time.

Works on iPad and iPhone devices

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/saferkid-text-monitoring-app/id1143802529>



SCREEN TIME

As the 2019 winner of a National Parenting Product Award, Screen Time reports that it allows parents to, “manage the time your kids spend on their tablets and smartphones.”

Works on Android and iOS devices

<https://screentimelabs.com/>

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CHILD LOCATOR

Along with monitoring content and controlling screen time, several APPs have developed a GPS feature to locate children's devices. For parents who have children riding the school bus, walking to a friend's house, or staying home alone, knowing the location of a child through their device can allow for parents to feel more confident in their child's safety. The child locator feature provides families with safety, accountability, and peace of mind. See below for a list of popular APPs that provide the additional child locator feature.

circle CIRCLE

Its website boasts that, "Circle is the easiest way to manage all your family's connected devices- wherever they are, wherever they go." Parents can also use Circle to locate family members through their devices.

Works on Android and iOS devices

<https://meetcircle.com/find-balance>



ESET PARENTAL CONTROL

In addition to monitoring and screen-time services, Eset Parental Control features a child locator that lets parents personalize zones for children and receive alerts when a child leaves a zone.

Works on Android devices

[https://www.eset.com/us/home/parental-control-android/?utm_campaign=us_b2c_search_b_android_a_gen_bmm&adgroupname=parental+control&keyword=%2Beset%20%2Bparental%20%2Bcontrol&matchtype=b&creative=208937484195&network=g&networkcategory=\[search\]&device=c&ds_rl=1251501&gclid=Cj0KCQjwsvrpBRCsARIsAKBR_0L-uLBkct24s-5XBuHJhz5UITdtkwhnkXlCM4WYwKjcSIXQGujq264aAu_iEALw_wcB&gclidsrc=aw.ds](https://www.eset.com/us/home/parental-control-android/?utm_campaign=us_b2c_search_b_android_a_gen_bmm&adgroupname=parental+control&keyword=%2Beset%20%2Bparental%20%2Bcontrol&matchtype=b&creative=208937484195&network=g&networkcategory=[search]&device=c&ds_rl=1251501&gclid=Cj0KCQjwsvrpBRCsARIsAKBR_0L-uLBkct24s-5XBuHJhz5UITdtkwhnkXlCM4WYwKjcSIXQGujq264aAu_iEALw_wcB&gclidsrc=aw.ds)



KASPERSKY SAFE KIDS

Along with monitoring content and controlling screen-time, Kaspersky Safe Kids supplies parents with the ability to use a GPS tracker to monitor kids' locations and develop safe zones for children.

Works on Windows, Ma, iPhone/iPad, and Android devices

<https://usa.kaspersky.com/safe-kids>



NET NANNY

In addition to monitoring and screen-time services, NET NANNY also includes a location tracker that provides current location, access to the location history, and most frequented locations of your child's device.

Works on Windows, Android, iOS, and Kindle devices

<https://www.netnanny.com/>



NORTON FAMILY PREMIER

Norton Family Premier offers services that help parents guide and monitor kids on the web and includes a locator feature that can provide current device location, as well as, a thirty day history of the device's location.

Works on some Windows, some Android, and some iOS devices

<https://us.norton.com/norton-family-premier>

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Child Locator Apps (continued)



OUR PACT PARENTAL CONTROL APP

Our Pact allows parents to control content and screen-time with an added benefit of a locator feature that utilizes geo-fencing to send an alert when children arrive and depart designated areas (school, home, etc.)

Works on Android devices

<https://ourpact.com/>



QUSTODIO

In addition to monitoring and screen-time services, Qustodio provides parents with location tracking for their child's device and a panic alert feature that allows kids to send a message to their parents when they are in danger.

Works on Windows, Mac OS X, Android, iOS, and Kindle devices

Available in other languages

<https://www.qustodio.com/en/>