

# Online Safety

Parental controls

# What do parental controls do?

- These controls are designed to help parents and carers manage their child's online activities. There are various types, some of which are free but others which can be bought. However, nothing is totally fool proof so they shouldn't replace the need for you to support and advise your child using the internet.



More than nine in ten parents of 5-15s who use parental control software consider it useful <sup>1</sup> [↗](#)

# What can controls be used for?

- Controls can either be for a device like a games console, or for a network such as your home broadband.
- The way to access device controls can vary according to the manufacturer. They can offer varying types of protection, from filtering out adult content from search results to preventing your child from buying things when playing games. You can usually find instructions on how to set these controls up on the manufacturer's website.
- These settings will apply whether the device is being used in your home or outside – but it's easy for them to be switched off, so talk to your child about trust and responsibility, making sure they understand the importance of why you have put the settings in place.
- Most games consoles come with settings, which can be put in place for either the device itself or the games platform. It's easy to forget that games consoles allow players to connect to the internet and talk to people all over the world so setting controls on devices and the platform itself (such as Xbox) is important.
- Broadband and network filters generally come free with your service. These can be used to prevent material coming into your home. For example, you could restrict anything with a horror or sexual content being accessible via your home broadband. Instructions for accessing these filters can be found on the service provider's websites – look at the bottom of the page to find the "help" or "security" page.

# Online controls

Search engines such as Google, Yahoo and Bing allow users to filter out certain types of search results. This means you can reduce the risk of your child seeing adult content or set limits on the time they spend online. Look for the cogwheel “settings” symbol where you will find the options for each provider. You can also encourage your child to use safer search facilities, such as SafeSearch Kids from Google.

Default browser

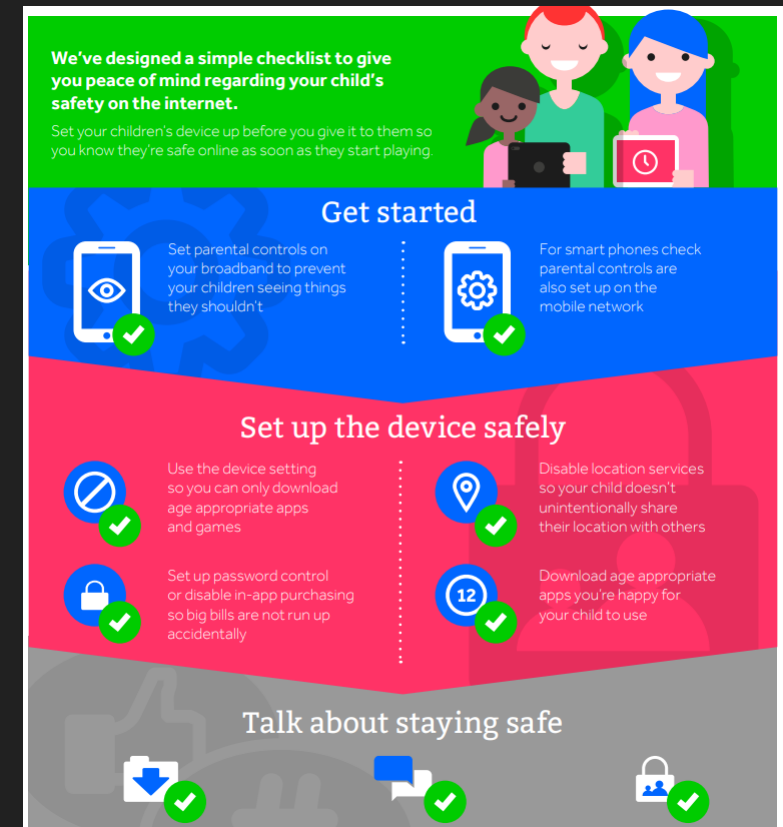
# Social media and other websites

- As with search engines, social media and sites like YouTube have privacy and security settings. These can prevent your child from being contacted by strangers or from seeing inappropriate material. It is important to remember that content filters can't prevent other people from sending offensive or inappropriate messages or comments to your child's account, so controlling who can contact your child is a key step.

# Support checklist

Below is a link for the internet matters *Set up Safe Checklist*.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/>



# Dropdown tool

Also on the website there is a tool to use which has a list of different makes/models of the devices your children may be using.

You can select the device and it will give you a step-by-step guide on how to apply any privacy settings.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/>

The screenshot displays the 'Dropdown tool' interface from the Internet Matters website. It consists of five distinct panels, each representing a different category of technology. Each panel includes a title, a dropdown menu for selecting a device, a circular icon representing the category, and a green 'VIEW ALL' button.

- Smartphones and other devices:** Features a smartphone icon. The dropdown menu is currently empty.
- Entertainment & Search engines:** Features a television icon. The dropdown menu is currently empty.
- Broadband & mobile networks:** Features a Wi-Fi signal icon. The dropdown menu is currently empty.
- Social media:** Features a speech bubble icon. The dropdown menu is currently empty.
- Gaming console:** Features a game controller icon. The dropdown menu is currently empty.