https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/Parental-controls/

What do parental controls do?

These controls are designed to help you manage your child's online activities. Parental controls can set online time restrictions for your child and create content filters to manage the content they see. Parental controls can be used across your broadband, Wi-Fi, apps, games consoles and personal devices including mobile phones and tablets. 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 on online safety. How can I use parental controls?

Accessing device controls can vary according to the manufacturer. Controls can offer differ types of protection. From filtering out adult content in search results, to preventing your child from buying things when playing games. You can find instructions on how to set controls on the manufacturer's website or to find specific guidance for your device, network or platform use this online tool from Internet Matters.

Control settings will apply whether the device is being used in your home or outside. It's also easy for controls to be switched off, so make sure your child understands why the settings are in place.

What are some examples of parental controls?

Games consoles

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 on the platform itself is important.

Broadband and network

Broadband and network controls can be used to prevent inappropriate material from being accessed. For example, restricting anything with a horror or sexual content from 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 allow users to filter out certain types of search results. This means you can reduce the risk of your child seeing adult content like pornography, 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.

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.

Paid controls

It is also possible to buy filter programmes. These can be either solely for filtering purposes, but some virus protection software also offer filtering options.

5 action for setting parental controls

1. Set up home broadband parental controls and make use of controls on your home broadband.

2. Set controls on your search engine; encourage your child to always use child-friendly search engines and activate and lock the safe search settings on the browsers and platforms they use.

3. Use privacy settings on apps and devices; activate the safety measures offered by different sites. Social networking sites like Facebook have privacy settings that will help prevent your child from sharing too much personal information or from seeing unsuitable advertising.

4. Block pop-ups. If you're worried about your children accessing inappropriate content though accidentally clicking on adverts in pop-ups, follow the advice from Tech Advisor on how to stop these.

5. Have open conversations with your child about online safety and reassure them that they can talk to you or a trusted adult whenever they need to. By talking to your child about their interests you can help them find suitable sites to visit and apps to use. Review these sites as they get older.