



Isolating Technology + Parental Controls

Devices are purchased for a primary use, but today devices are marketed for their ability to do everything. For example, an iPod used to be just music, but if you remember later-stage iPods they basically turned into iPhones.

Deep down, don't we all want a Classic iPod in the house for kids and music?

If we cannot keep devices isolated for their primary use, managing boundaries and parental controls is nearly impossible.

Here is a Suggestion (not a requirement!) for Primary Technology Boundaries for Devices for Kids/Teens:

Computers:

Are for schoolwork, research, maybe some shopping, limited internet searching.

Are NOT for games, social media, endless internet searching, or streaming movies, shows, or YouTube.

Phones:

Are for talking, texting, and some basic apps (Weather, Music, Camera, GPS, school account (Canvas), whatever other 'hand-picked' Apps parents approve.

Are NOT for games, social media, internet (opt'l), YouTube, streaming shows, etc.

Tablets:

These are no-man's land. They have no specific primary purpose.

Video Game Counsels:

Are for video games. 😊

Are NOT for YouTube!

TVs:

Are for shows and movies.

Are NOT for games.



Parental Controls for Android / Google / PC / Apple

(Another option is phones like Gabb or Bark that are pre-restricted, limited in their capability)

Computers

Computer parental controls are largely there to monitor internet use and downloading of apps and programs. There are very good services, the key to effectively having good parental control over a computer is using the native parental control program for that brand of computer.

Parental Control applications are marketed to work well across other brands of technology, but that is not the case.

PC's (ie, Dell, HP): Microsoft Family Link, and Microsoft Edge Browser

Google Chromebooks: Family Link, and Chrome Browser

Apple MacBooks: Apple Family Sharing + ScreenTime, and use Safari.

Phones (can include tablets)

Phones are similar to computers. The native apps are more reliable, free, but limited. If you aren't allowing social media, computer gaming and open streaming, in most cases native apps are preferable. If you're kids have access to internet, YouTube, social media, then you will want additional 'Outside Apps.'

Native Phone Parental Control Apps

Android / Google Phones: Google Family Link

Apple: ScreenTime in Apple Family Settings

Outside Parental Control Apps (Phone + Computers)

Bark - \$14/mo, works across multiple platforms, uses Ai to monitor communications and internet search.

Covenant Eyes – Can be used on all devices to monitor communication, internet surfing, social media, etc. Starts at \$18/mo.

Qustodia – More detailed, data-driven, metrics on kids online usage, easy to pause internet. Social media monitoring is not as good. \$4-\$8/mo. Can setup daily online limits for apps. Can monitor calls and texts.

Aura – One-stop shop. Gaming-chat monitoring, content filtering, wide-ranging features, up to \$32/mo. Offers credit monitoring and financial theft monitoring. Kids package is \$10/mo, works well for most families.