

ADDITUDE's Top 10 Parental Control Apps



From the ADHD Experts at

ADDITUDE

Strategies and Support for ADHD & LD

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A trusted source of advice and information for families touched by attention-deficit disorder—
and a voice of inspiration to help people with ADHD find success at home, at school, and on the job.

ADDitudeMag.com

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CONTACT INFORMATION

New Hope Media 646-366-0830
108 West 39th St, Suite 805
New York, NY 10018

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ADDITUDE'S Top 10 Parental Control Apps

By: Janice Rodden

The technology on your child's wish list is powerful and fascinating and entertaining...and terrifying — especially if he has impulse-control and time-management problems. Smart, safe Internet use begins with a two-part process: educate your child about what it means to behave safely online, and put restrictions in place to guide him.

How? Start with these apps, but don't stop there. Begin an ongoing conversation with your child, tween, or teen about how to behave safely on the Internet even *without* your controls — and why safety matters. There's a fine line between keeping kids protected and invading their budding privacy.

Understanding Parental Control Apps

Most parental control apps – for iOS and Android – charge an annual subscription fee that's tied to the number of devices covered. These fees can range in price from \$10 to more than \$100.

Most services offer a wide variety of functionality:

- Content filtering
- Site or app blocking
- Screen-time limits
- Location tracking
- Geofencing
- Call and text monitoring
- Social network supervision

- Contact blocking
- Emergency assistance

Features may vary from platform to platform, so be sure the tools you want will work on your child's device. iOS devices have certain built-in developer and security restrictions that sometimes limit a program's functionality or override app restrictions. iOS 12 offers many native screen-time controls that allow parents to schedule "Downtime" when apps can't be used, set time limits for apps, choose apps that are always allowed, and block inappropriate content – all without the need for any additional program.

ADDitude's Top 10 Parental Control Apps Comparison Chart

Product	Price	Platforms	Content filtering	Site/app blocking	Screen-time limits	Location tracking	Geofencing	Call/text monitoring	Social network supervision	Contact blocking	Emergency assistance
OurPact	Free to \$6.99 monthly	iOS, Android	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Kaspersky Safe Kids	Free to \$12 annually	iOS, Mac, Android, Windows	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Norton Family Premier	\$49.99 annually	iOS, Android, Windows	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Family Time	Free to \$69 annually	iOS, Android	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Qustodio	Free to \$137.95 annually	iOS, Mac, Android, Windows, Kindle	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Net Nanny	Up to \$119.99 annually	iOS, Mac, Android, Windows	✓		✓			✓		✓	
Boomerang	Free to \$30.99	iOS, Android	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Locategy	Free to \$70	iOS, Android	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Mobicip	Free to \$39.99 annually	iOS, Mac, Android, Windows, Kindle, Chromebook	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Pumpic	Free to \$6.99 monthly	iOS, Mac, Android, Windows	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

ADDitude's Top 10 Parental Control Apps

1. OurPact: Parental Control and Kid Tracker

iOS, Android: Free to \$6.99 monthly

This all-around app solution is highly rated by parents for its site restrictions, screen-time management, and geolocation tools. It's free to use, but requires a monthly payment for access to premium features.

Parents access a family dashboard through which you may find device locations; receive alerts when your child arrives or leaves a set zone – like school or home; block adult websites, apps, texting, or the internet; schedule screen time; and set a daily screen allowance.

It doesn't let you monitor everywhere your child goes on the Internet, but can help to set phone limits and make exploring online a little safer.

2. Kaspersky Safe Kids

iOS, Mac, Android, Windows: Free to \$12 annually

Kaspersky Safe Kids works by installing an app on your child's device and an app on your device that lets you see reports and customize settings. It offers typical features like screen-time restrictions, controlled access to certain apps, adult content filters, and location tracking. It also tracks public activity on Facebook, and provides call and text message screening for Android devices. Limitations exist on iOS platforms.

The app has extensive alert functionality. You can set safe areas for your child on a map and receive instant alerts if he or she leaves the designated zone. The battery monitor alerts you when your child's battery is low so you can remind her to plug in.

3. Norton Family Premier

iOS, Android, Windows: \$49.99 annually

Known best for its antivirus software, Norton has become a major player in the parental control space. Your subscription works on unlimited devices, which is popular among large families with multiple phones or tablets per person. Install without limitations on any computer, tablet, or phone your child uses.

The feature that sets Norton apart is its nuanced website control. In addition to site blocking, location monitoring, and time limits, this solution offers site logs – including YouTube video lists and snippets. It keeps track of the sites your child visits, and allows you to issue warnings for ones that you don't want to completely ban, but would rather your

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child not spend hours and hours scrolling through – like Reddit. If kids disagree, they can submit an access request for parents to review from within the app. It also offers Instant Lock, which renders devices useless without an access pin.

Screen-time limits apply across all devices, but are not compatible with Macs. Call and text tracking is less invasive than some programs. Instead of blanket tracking, it lets you choose select conversations to monitor. Some reviews say the web extension that limits access is easily disabled by crafty teens.

4. **FamilyTime**

iOS, Android: Free to \$69 annually

The subscription cost is device-based, meaning the price goes up every time you install it on another phone or tablet. Parents can use this to block apps and set screen-time rules for mobile devices. The program also allows kids to “save” minutes from their daily limit to use later during designated “FunTime” like on holidays or weekends.

FamilyTime also offers features to protect your kids in real life: a panic button that automatically sends you location information, a “Teen Safe Drive” feature that monitors and reports on vehicle speed, and watch list contacts that alerts you if certain designated people contact your kids. This app cannot monitor activity on home computers – Macs or PCs – and doesn’t offer a site log of Internet activity.

5. **Qustodio**

iOS, Mac, Android, Windows, Kindle: Free to \$137.95 annually

Qustodio is your child’s Internet custodian. It blocks inappropriate content across browsers – even in private mode – and shows a timeline with previews of all the sites your child visits. You can set limits for screen time across all devices, with schedules for total device and specific app usage capped by a total time allotment across all devices. The program monitors time spent on social networks including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, and more. It offers call and text monitoring, along with location and a panic button your child can use to call for help.

It works on the Kindle if you want to protect Amazon devices. The pricing plan, however, is expensive for a family with many devices.

6. **Net Nanny**

iOS, Mac, Android, Windows: Up to \$119.99 annually

Net Nanny offers advanced web filtering categories that can evaluate when certain terms are used profanely or in a medical context. You can

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set content as block, warn, or allow and choose to mask swear words with symbols on unrestricted sites. The program uses email alerts to keep parents up to date. Kids can request access to a site, and then parents can remotely approve or uphold the block. Detailed site logs make it easy to tell when a conversation about inappropriate content is in order.

Parents can determine certain days and times when each user may access his or her devices, or set a total amount of allotted time in half hour increments for the week. Net Nanny applies time limits to overall Internet usage across all devices and platforms. There aren't app-specific controls for iOS, so phone games and social-media use are less regulated. This service does not offer location monitoring options.

7. Boomerang **iOS, Android: Free to \$30.99**

Boomerang automatically includes safe search when your child is using its proprietary browser. In addition, you can monitor YouTube activity and search history. When installed, it can block any new apps your child tries to download until you explicitly approve them, and encourage usage of always-approved apps.

Parents may set a daily time allocation and a schedule for when usage is allowed – including a bedtime shutoff time. You may also set ad hoc time outs that disable all device features except emergency calling until parental approval is granted.

Unlike many location-tracking programs, Boomerang lets you to create custom-drawn geofence limits and then receive a notification if your child violates the boundaries you set up.

Call and text tracking can be less invasive – Boomerang lets you choose select conversations or words to monitor on Android devices, or to collect a total SMS history. You can also select who your child can and can't communicate with. It is mobile-only, so any protections you set up don't extend to desktop computers.

8. Locategy **iOS, Android: Free to \$70**

With Locategy, set up a usage schedule to control which apps your child is allowed to use, for how long, and when – e.g., not during school or at dinner time. Advanced location tracking provides data on where your child is at any moment, along with historical locations for the past four days. Use geofencing to designate set areas your child is allowed to visit, and receive an alert when your child arrives in certain locations.

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LocateMy allows for multiple “parent” devices, so tutors or sitters can track children, too. You can remotely wipe a phone if your child loses her device. This service allows for call log tracking, and web usage reports, but doesn’t let parents block contact with certain numbers. The geofencing features are more robust in iOS, and web filtering capabilities don’t work in all browsers.

9. **Mobicip**

iOS, Mac, Android, Windows, Kindle, Chromebook: Free to \$39.99 annually

Mobicip is notable for its wide device compatibility. It is an overall good choice for families who want non-invasive protection – recommended by Wes Crenshaw, Ph.D. Mobicip provides nuanced Internet controls, but lacks certain features other parental control apps include. For example, it doesn’t offer real-time parent notifications, remote approval, or call/text monitoring.

When using the Mobicip browser, the web filter will analyze sites and then block offensive parts or entire sites. Take control of what video content your child can access via popular streaming services with robust YouTube filtering, and view logs of her web browsing history as well.

You can schedule approved usage times, block designated apps and sites, and track your child’s location. There is no daily or weekly limit for maximum usage – users set a schedule by selecting hours of the day when device usage is OK. Mobicip allows for two “parent” devices to keep everyone in the loop. Changes in the parent dashboard can take a couple hours to filter down to the child device.

10. **Pumpic**

iOS, Mac, Android, Windows: Free to \$6.99 monthly

With Pumpic, you can track your child’s calls and text messages, then block or limit them as you deem necessary. Keep track of what your child is doing online using detailed browsing history logs and chat/social media monitoring. Pumpic lets you review calendar, email, photo, and video activity – either downloaded or shot with the device camera. It can track a number of social media platforms ranging from WhatsApp, Facebook, and Snapchat to Skype, Viber and Kik. Parents may block specific websites or apps as needed. Pumpic allows for location tracking with geofencing. If your child loses his phone, you can wipe it remotely.

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ADDitude eBooks Available Now

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The ADDitude Guide to Mobile Apps & Digital Tools

You hold unlimited tools and information in the palm of your hand — literally! Mobile apps and digital tools can track your workouts, swap your face, and even help you manage your most challenging ADHD symptoms like sleeplessness, distractibility, and disorganization. But with 3 million (and counting!) mobile apps to choose from, how can you find the resources worth your money and memory?

>> Learn more about this eBook: <http://additu.de/bapps>

Video Games and the ADHD Brain

Whether its Minecraft or Candy Crush or Mario Kart or World of Warcraft, our kids are especially prone to extremes — playing as much as they can all the time and reacting terribly to limits. We understand that tired parents want to strike a smart balance without waging war — that is where this report comes in.

>> Learn more about this eBook: <http://additu.de/videogames>

Your ADHD Homework Survival Guide

After working hard to focus and remember all day long, your child fights his nightly homework with a vengeance. And who can blame him? Children with ADHD struggle with executive functions, working memory, and restlessness — skills that are taxed all day. Parents who are tired of daily battles over vocab lists and multiplication tables agree: There has to be a better way.

>> Learn more about this eBook: <http://additu.de/hw-book>

FREE ADDitude Downloads

Smart Learning Apps

A comprehensive list of teacher-recommended apps that help students learn and practice positive behaviors.

How to Regulate Your Teen's Devices

Learn how to set smart boundaries for your child's devices with these five W's (and an H).

The Secret Power of Fidgets

Learn how movement can help students with ADHD to focus, and the fidgets we love.

Brain Building Video and Computer Games

Help your child pick video games that boost attention and executive skills with this guide.

The Daily Report Card

This home-school communication tool targets problem behaviors in the classroom.

2-Week Guide to Ending Defiant Behavior

Starting today, change your mindset about consequences.

13 Parenting Strategies for Kids with ADHD

What does it take to be a great parent to a child with ADHD? A few adjustments in your parenting skills and the way you interact with your child.

**Find these and many
more free ADHD
resources online at:**
[http://additu.de/
freedownloads](http://additu.de/freedownloads)

Expert Webinar Replays:

Technology Rules and Systems for Easily Distracted Teens

>> <http://additu.de/device>

The key to using screen time productively, for many families, is the establishment of a parent-child agreement and system designed to maximize the value of electronic tools and to minimize the downside. Learn how, in this webinar.

Tech Tools for a Better School Year

>> <http://additu.de/tech-tools>

Your child's IEP or 504 Plan includes the use of assistive technology. Smart. But how do you ensure that the best technology is implemented consistently and used correctly? Should you research different technologies for use at home? What benchmarks will show you a technology is working? Find out, in this webinar.

Improve Your Child's Social Smarts with YouTube, Video & Board Games

>> <http://additu.de/ytvvg>

Make sure your child has a firm grasp of these skills as the new school year begins by using YouTube videos and popular tabletop games to learn social concepts.

The Right Way to Train Your Brain

>> <http://additu.de/trainbrain>

Brain training apps and games are touted as transformational. But do these tools actually help children and adults with ADHD? Can they improve executive functions, processing speed, and sustained attention in real, measurable ways? Yes. Learn how.

FREE ADHD Newsletters from ADDitude

Sign up to receive critical news and information about ADHD diagnosis and treatment, success at school, adult ADHD, and parenting strategies:
<http://additu.de/newsletter>

Adult ADHD and LD

Expert advice on managing your household, time, money, career, and relationships

Parenting Children with ADHD and LD

Strategies and support for parents on behavior and discipline, time management, disorganization, and making friends.

ADHD and LD at School

How to get classroom accommodations, finish homework, work with teachers, find the right schools, and much more.

Treating ADHD

Treatment options for attention deficit including medications, food, supplements, brain training, mindfulness and other alternative therapies.

For Women with ADHD

Managing ADHD on the job, running a household, dealing with challenging emotions, and much more.