PROTECTING OUR KIDS
How to Use Social Media Parental Controls

LAST UPDATED: FEBRUARY 2025

For Apple Phones and Tablets
1. Go to Settings > Screen Time > Content & Privacy Restrictions
2. Enable Content & Privacy Restrictions
3. Tap Content Restrictions to:
4. Block explicit content, mature websites, and app downloads
5. Limit access to adult-rated media (movies, TV shows, music)
6. Set App Limits for specific apps (e.g., limit Instagram to 1 hour daily)
7. Use Downtime to block social media at bedtime

2For Android and Google Phones and Tablets(Google Family Link)
1. Download Google Family Link App (on parent & child's phone)
2. Set up Family Link and connect child's Google account
3. Use the dashboard to:
4. Block inappropriate websites
5. Limit screen time for apps
6. Set location tracking for safety
7. Google Play Store:
8. Go to Play Store > Settings > Family > Parental Controls
9. Restrict content based on age rating

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When parental controls are combined with conversation, community support, tech accountability, and digital literacy, we can better protect Black kids from online harms. Parental controls can be used to mitigate exposure to cyberbullying, anti-Black misinformation, online predators, and other harmful content. Here's a detailed, platform-by-platform guide to setting up parental controls, privacy settings, and content filters to help keep Black children safe online.

The following pages provide instructions platform by platform to navigate parent controls on social media app.

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1. **Apps To Help Parents With Parental Control Across Social Media**
   a. **[Bark]** – **Monitors social media messages, detects cyberbullying**
   b. **[Net Nanny]** – **Blocks inappropriate websites**
   c. **[Qustodio]** – **Tracks screen time & filters content**
   d. **[Google Family Link]** – **Restricts apps & sets screen limits**
   e. **[Opal]** – **Blocks apps for certain periods, rewards less screen time**

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For Facebook & Messenger (High Risk).

Facebook may be a high-risk platform for Black children, potentially exposing them to harmful content, misinformation, and online threats. By enabling privacy controls, limiting screen time, and having open conversations, we can help keep our kids safe. Remember, even with privacy settings, Facebook may expose kids to false news, racism, predatory behavior, and emotional and political manipulation.

a. ✅ **Use Facebook Supervision**
   i. Go to Settings > Family Center > Supervision
   ii. Send a parental invite to your child's accoun
b. ✅ **Set Account to Private & Restrict Who Can Contact Them**
   i. Go to Settings > Privacy
   ii. Change "Who Can See My Posts?" → Friends Only
   iii. Set "Who Can Send Me Friend Requests?" → Friends of Friends Only
   iv. Consider disabling public search visibility so strangers can't find them
   v.
c. ✅ **Limit Who Sees Their Personal Info**
   i. Go to Settings > Profile & Tagging
   ii. Disable "Allow Others to Tag Me" and set "Who Can See Posts You're Tagged In?" → Only Me
   iii. Turn Off Location Sharing
   iv. Go to Settings > Location and disable Facebook's location tracking
d. ✅ **Enable Parental Monitoring with Messenger Kids**
   i. Download Messenger Kids for younger children
   ii. Add only trusted contacts for messaging
   iii. Disable video calls from strangers

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For Instagram (Age 13+)

Instagram is one of the most popular social media platforms among Black teens, but it can expose them to racial bias, cyberbullying, unrealistic beauty standards, toxic influencer culture, and algorithm-driven misinformation.

a. ✅**Enable Instagram Supervision (For Parents)**
   i. Go to **Settings > Supervision**
   ii. Send an **invite** to your child's account for parental oversight
   iii. Set **time limits** and see how much time they spend on Instagram
b. ✅**Turn on Restricted Content & Privacy Settings**
   i. Go to **Settings > Privacy**
   ii. Set account to **Private** (prevents strangers from following)
   iii. Restrict who can contact them: Go to **Settings > Messages, Set "Allow Messages From"** → **Friends Only** and Disable **DMs from unknown people**
   iv. **Turn off comments** from non-followers (**Settings > Privacy > Comments**)
   v. **Enable "Sensitive Content Control"** (**Settings > Account > Sensitive Content**) Set it to **"Limit Even More"** to prevent exposure to harmful content
c. ✅ Monitor What They See
   i. Mute/block harmful accounts
   ii. Use the "Hidden Words" filter to block racist/harmful messages
   iii. Check "Following" & "Liked" pages for harmful content
d. ✅ Discuss Racial Bias
   i. Cyberbullying & toxic beauty standards affect Black teens deeply—regularly check in on how Instagram makes them feel.
   ii. Instagram's algorithms may emphasize Eurocentric beauty standards & white influencers—teach kids to recognize this bias

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For TikTok (Ages 13+)

TikTok can be a fun space, but it also poses risks to Black kids—including cyberbullying, racial discrimination, misinformation, and addiction.

✅ **Use "Family Pairing" for Direct Parental Controls**
Open TikTok > Go to Profile > Settings
Select Family Pairing
Link your account to your child's
Set Screen Time Limits
Disable DMs for strangers

✅ **Enable Privacy & Safety Settings**
Set account to Private (Settings > Privacy > Private Account)
Restrict adult content, self-harm challenges, and racist content
Go to Settings > Content Preferences > Restricted Mode
Enable it & set a PIN
Disable "Suggest Account to Others"
Turn off "Allow Downloads" (prevents strangers from saving videos)

✅ **Block Harmful Trends & Challenges**
Follow Black content creators to ensure positive representation
Regularly check their "For You Page" for problematic content

✅ **Turn Off Location Sharing & Stop Data Collection**
Go to Settings > Privacy > Personalization & Data
Disable "Personalized Ads" & "Location Tracking"

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For YouTube & YouTube Kids

YouTube is one of the most influential platforms for kids and teens, but it may also expose them to racist content, misinformation, predatory behavior, and harmful beauty and body image standards, and social media addiction. Black children may face unique risks including: racist or anti-Black content disguised as "educational" or "funny" videos and misinformation spreading fake history about Black people.

✅ **Use YouTube Kids for Younger Children**
  - i. Download YouTube Kids App
  - ii. Set Profile Restrictions based on child's age
  - iii. Disable Search (to prevent exposure to inappropriate content)
  - iv. Set up "Approved Content Only" Mode

✅ **Enable YouTube Supervised Experience (For Older Kids)**
  - i. Go to Settings > Digital Wellbeing > Supervised Account
  - ii. Choose between:
    1. "Explore" (age 9-12, more filters)
    2. "Explore More" (age 13+, fewer restrictions)
    3. "Most of YouTube" (teen mode)

✅ **Restrict Inappropriate Content**
  - i. Turn on Restricted Mode (Settings > General > Restricted Mode)
  - ii. Disable Autoplay (to prevent algorithm-driven harmful content)
  - iii. Monitor Watch History in Settings > History & Privacy

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For Twitter (X) (High Risk)

Due to a lack of content moderation, Twitter could be considered one of the more manipulated platforms for misleading information and political propaganda. It can also be breeding ground for racist trolls, misinformation, and algorithmic manipulation that may harm Black children and teens.

✅ **Turn On Privacy Restrictions**
  i. Set account to Private (Settings > Privacy & Safety > Audience)
    1. Turn on "Sensitive Content Warning" to block racist & harmful content
    2. Disable "Photo Tagging"
  ii. **Restrict who can contact them: Go to Settings > Privacy & Safety > Direct Messages**
    1. Disable "Allow Message Requests from Everyone"
    2. Set "Allow Messages from Followers Only"

✅ **Block Hate Speech & Harmful Content**
  i. Go to Settings > Content Preferences
    1. Enable "Hide Sensitive Content"
    2. Turn on "Muted Words" and add: Racial slurs, Hate speech terms

✅ **Limit Algorithmic Manipulation**
  i. Go to Settings > Personalization & Data
    1. Disable Interest-Based Ads & Algorithm Tracking
  ii. **Turn Off Algorithm-Driven Feeds (Prevent Unwanted Content from Surfacing)**
    1. Tap the ✨ Star Icon in the top-right
    2. Select "Following" instead of "For You"

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For Twitch (High Risk)

Twitch is extremely popular for live-streaming games, esports, and discussions, but can be full of racism, hate speech and cyberbullying, especially toward Black streamers. Twitch does not offer built-in parental tools and is one of the hardest platforms to control due to its live, unpredictable nature. But by adjusting settings, setting limits, and having open conversations, parents can help Black children navigate Twitch.

✅**Make Account Private & Restrict Who Can Contact Them**
   i. Go to Settings > Security & Privacy
   ii. Enable "Block Whispers from Strangers" (prevents private messages from unknown users)
   iii. Require "Verified Email" to Chat – Stops bots & trolls (Settings > Security & Privacy > Chat Verification)
   iv. Disable "Suggest Friend Requests" to avoid random adds
   v. Turn off "Auto-Accept Friend Requests"

✅ **Restrict Inappropriate Channels & Streams**
   i. Enable "Mature Content Filter" (Settings > Content Preferences)

✅ **Turn on "Safe Chat" Mode**
   i. Go to Chat Settings
   ii. Enable "AutoMod" (filters inappropriate messages)
   iii. Set "Chat Delay" to slow down chat & block spammers
   iv. Add banned words (racial slurs, harmful terms)