

Esports Parental Guidance

Monitoring your child's tablets, phone, and gaming console

Chances are there has been a point in your parenting life where you have struggled with limiting your child's exposure to online devices. There may be times when you may think your child is in their room studying or doing homework, but your child is on their phone or playing video games. Even worse, your child may be neglecting their homework completely to spend time surfing the web. As a parent what do you do? You can yell, discipline, or even take devices away, but to your surprise, your child finds a new distraction on another device. In today's day and age, young adults have become so dependent on their handheld devices, gaming, and even social media that it teeters on borderline addiction. Here's how the Bentley High School Esports Club can help.

The first steps you can take to set up parental controls in your home are to go directly to the source of the Wi-Fi, the router and the handheld device. Cable, internet, and phone providers have made things extremely user friendly when it comes to restricting your child's Wi-Fi and phone usage.

If you are an Xfinity customer, Xfinity has made this process easy for you.

1. Log in to your Xfinity account and click on the user you wish to modify.
2. Go under access rules and edit the usage for your child's device.
3. The bed time mode feature allows you to pause your child's Wi-Fi access during hours when your child should be asleep. For instance, these hours could be set from 8 p.m. – 7 a.m.
4. Parental controls help you control what type of content is allowed to be viewed while logged into your home's Wi-Fi network.

Another option is downloading the "Wifi-Blocker" app on your phone. This app is available for free in the Google Play store and for \$4.99 in the Apple App store. With this one simple app you have endless control over your internet. This app works with your router directly and allows you to block Wi-Fi to any or all devices, or block a single device at any time. You can see who is connected to your Wi-Fi as well. You can add timed schedules that Wi-Fi is automatically turned on and off during selected hours of the day. This is beneficial for bedtime hours or hours in which your child should be doing homework. This one app puts all the control at the fingertip of the parent.

Additionally, here are eight more options you can do in your home to monitor your child's internet usage.

1. Talk to Your Kids and Set Boundaries and Expectations
 - Let your kids know what is expected of them by teaching them about child internet safety.
2. Physically Lock up Your Router
 - One of the easiest ways for your child to circumvent your security settings is to reset your router to its factory default settings. By locking it up, they physically cannot get to router to restore the factory setting.

3. Set Router-Enforced Time Limits for Internet Access
 - Most routers have a setting which gives you the ability to cut off access to the internet at a certain time of day.
4. Disable Wireless Remote Administration of Your Router
 - If you turn off the "Remote Administration via Wireless" feature on your router, then someone trying to hack into its settings would have to be on a computer that is physically connected (via an Ethernet cable) to the router.
5. Enable the Parental Control Features on Your Child's Game Systems and/or Mobile Devices
 - Parents often overlook the fact that their kids can get to the internet via their game consoles, iPods, and cell phones. These devices have web browsers just like your home PC does. The filters you install on your computer will do nothing to stop your kids from visiting forbidden sites using their mobile device or game system. Thankfully, most devices kids would use, such as the iPad and PlayStation 4, have parental controls that you can set to restrict the content that your kids can access.
6. Scan for Unsecured Wireless Access Points Near Your Home
 - All of your firewalls and filters go out the window if your child attaches to your neighbor's unsecured wireless access point and starts leeching off of their internet connection. This essentially cuts your internet filters out because they are no longer in play as your child is using a different network entirely.
7. Enable Activity Logging on Your Router and PCs.
 - Your child will most likely figure out how to cover their tracks by deleting browser histories or by enabling "private browsing mode" where no history is kept. The best thing you can do is purchase monitoring software that is not easily defeated or detected by your child. Periodically review the log files to make sure your kids are staying out of trouble. You can also configure parental controls in different browsers for another layer of protection.
8. Put Their PC in an Open Area of the House That is Well Frequented
 - It's hard for child to visit "bad" websites if he has to use the PC in the kitchen. If the PC is in a well-frequented area where you can see it, your kids are less likely to attempt to go to unauthorized sites. Kids may love having a PC in their room, but consider moving it somewhere less private so you can keep an eye on what is going on.

Bentley High School Esports is committed to enhancing your child's high school experience through the Esports after school club. However, we are holding ourselves responsible and accountable for the amount of time your child plays video games in their life. This is why we are offering ways to limit your child's exposure to gaming in the home and at the school. We are set on teaching the balance in life between gaming and at home responsibilities. With that being said, we look forward to growing this club with the help of you and your child.