

iOS Parental Controls 101

iOS is the mobile operating system from Apple. It's used on iPhones, iPads and iPod Touch devices. Apple limits what type of apps get approved in their store. At this point in time, there isn't a definitive way to provide 100 percent parental controls like you'd see on a desktop or laptop computer. However, there still are ways to protect family members within the operating system. Below are the steps in detail describing how to do them and also why they are recommended.

Since there are a variety of ways to setup parental controls in iOS, these directions are written based upon a child that is less than 13 years of age and the parent is choosing to follow the rules of the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), a Federal Law to protect the tracking of children on the Internet under the age of 13.

Remove Ad Tracking

Reasons why: By default, iOS provides advertisers with the ability to track the device and send targeted ads to the device called the Advertising Identifier. It was designed to keep advertisers from tracking activity on the iOS device. It is similar to the new "Do Not Track" features in most new browsers for computers. Thus, if the parent does not turn of the Advertising Identifier in iOS, she is agreeing to the default terms of service from Apple that she is allowing her child to be tracked by advertisers therefore disregarding the COPPA law.



Step-by-step directions:

1. Select the "Settings" icon (looks like a bunch of gears) and select General > About > Advertising.
2. Toggle "Limit Ad Tracking" to ON.

Turn on Find iPhone

Reasons why: An iOS device can be tracked and if a child is with it, she can be tracked too. It can also be used to find a device that is lost in the house or misplaced. The service can be utilized from another iOS device or via a Web browser on a computer to also remotely wipe the device from afar. Also, having the power to remotely wipe an iOS device provides quite an incentive for a child.

Step-by-step directions:

1. Select Settings>Mail, Contacts, Calendars > Add Account...
2. Select iCloud and enter in the parents Apple ID and password. (If the parent does not have an Apple ID, go to this URL to set one up: <http://appleid.apple.com> or set one up on the iOS device by going to Settings > iTunes & App Stores.)
3. Leave all the features turned off except for "Find my iPad (iPhone, iPod).
4. Go to Settings > Privacy > Location Services. Toggle "Location Services" to ON.
5. Select Find My iPad (iPhone, iPod) and toggle to ON.

Turn on General iOS Restrictions

Reason why: This is the core parental restrictions opportunity for the parent. This is where she can restrict to age appropriate music, apps and movies based upon her parental judgment.

Step-by-step directions:

1. Select Settings > General > Restrictions and select "Enable Restrictions".
2. Select a pass code that will not be shared with the child.
3. Toggle off any application on the device you would not like the child to use. Note: never let a child have the ability to delete an app because she will then be able to remove some of the apps the parent has in place to protect the family. For parents with smaller children, it is also recommended to disable Safari and use another browser called [Mobicip](#).
4. Edit the allowed content to what the parent considers appropriate for the child for movies, TV shows, books and apps, volume limits for headphones, etc.



Following all the above listed steps provide some basic parental controls within iOS that will give you control of most of the basic operating system.

Resources:

- <http://coppa.org>
<http://mobicip.com>

©Bernadette H. Murray, 2013

Find out more at DigitalSecurityMom.com, also on Facebook and Twitter @DSecurityMom.

"A mom's perspective to protecting your family's digital life."