

## Case Study: Microsoft Windows 8 Family Safety Settings

Kids today are growing up online. They use digital devices to do their homework, play games, communicate with friends, and access the wealth of information on the web. Technology gives children access to many positive experiences; however, parents face challenges in monitoring what their children see online, the people they meet, and the information they share.

At Microsoft, we want to help parents create a healthy computing environment for their kids. That's why we set out to hear from parents about what matters most to them in helping their kids stay safer online.

Conducted in five countries – Brazil, China, France, India and the U.S. – Microsoft heard from more than 2,000 parents of children ages 5 to 15 about what matters most in helping keep their kids safer online before setting out to develop the Windows 8 Family Safety Settings. According to the study, protecting children from online predators or offensive content tops the list of parental concerns at 87 percent. However, parents were almost split down the middle when it comes to choosing between monitoring their child's online activity (43%) versus limiting access all together (45%) as more important.

Overall, the findings revealed:

- Web filtering is significantly more important than other restrictions when using a computing or mobile device.
- Parents who prefer to monitor without limiting sites, select this control feature because it allows them to understand their children better.
- Parents who prefer to limit or block sites, without monitoring most often select this because it allows them to control what their child can or cannot access.

### **A safer Internet is just a click away**

With Windows 8, you can monitor what your kids are doing, no matter where they use their PC. All you have to do is create a Windows user account for each child, check the box to turn on Family Safety, and then review weekly reports that describe your children's PC use. No additional downloads, installation wizards, or configuration steps are required. Just check the box!

### **The “monitor first” approach**

In the past, many of the industry software solutions for family safety (including Microsoft's) focused on web filtering and other software-based restrictions. This resulted in a more complex setup experience and a constant stream of parental approval requests that could be difficult to manage. The end result was that many parents abandoned family safety products and returned to in-person supervision only—a tactic that has become less effective as computers have gotten more mobile.

Windows 8 gives you a “monitor first” approach, which provides informative activity reports for each child.

## Standard accounts for the kids

We've long recommended that parents log in as the computer administrator and make sure children have separate standard accounts. In Windows 8, accounts that the administrator –or “parent” –creates are automatically created as standard accounts. This approach has several benefits. Children:

- Won't be able to access their parent's email, online accounts, documents, etc.
- Can customize their own account settings without affecting their parent's account
- Won't be able to download malware or other questionable files because the SmartScreen Application Reputation service automatically prevents it

## For parents who want more control

Activity reporting, which is on automatically in the new Family Safety, is the perfect solution for many parents. However, if you like more control, you can set up more powerful and customizable restrictions directly from links in the activity reporting email, or on [familysafety.microsoft.com](http://familysafety.microsoft.com), if needed.

We are continually striving to help you create a safe, family-friendly computing environment for your kids, but of course, we know that this means different things to different parents. Some parents prefer to simply keep an eye on their children. Others prefer to set up software restrictions on their child's computing activities. We think the simplicity and power of the “monitor first” approach in Microsoft Family Safety addresses either style effectively and will lead to more family conversations about online safety, a safer computing experience for kids, and increased peace of mind for parents.

Microsoft can help you make Internet safety a family affair. Teach yourself and your family using our interactive Digital Citizenship in Action Toolkit; visit <http://www.microsoft.com/security> for other advice and guidance, and follow us on Twitter [www.twitter.com/SaferOnline](http://www.twitter.com/SaferOnline) and Facebook [www.facebook.com/SaferOnline](http://www.facebook.com/SaferOnline).

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