

E-Safety: The Internet In Your Home

The Internet is a great educational tool, an excellent communication tool and a source of countless hours of entertainment. For peace of mind you may wish to consider the range of Internet filtering solutions available. This document will give you a brief guide to the three main options.

Broadband Family Filters

All the major internet providers offer a free service to allow you to filter out explicit, violent and extremist material being accessible through your home broadband connection. The filters obviously won't be able to stop every single item of inappropriate material out there in cyberspace but it is a very good place to start if you are keen to regulate the material your children can access via the Internet in your home. Some providers turn this feature on by default, others require you to login to your account to enable the filter. Some also allow you to customise the type of material you block to your own discretion:

ISP	Family Filter Name	Enabled By Default?	Customisable Site List
BT	BT Parental Controls	No	Yes
Plusnet	Plusnet Protect	No	Yes
Sky	Sky Broadband Shield	No	Yes
Talk Talk	HomeSafe	Yes	Yes
Virgin	Web Safe	No	No

Internet Management Software

Another way to restrict the internet access on your computer is to install software that manages the internet on that machine. The most widely known package in this area is one called Net Nanny though this software requires a yearly subscription. A free alternative is a package called K9 Web Protection. This can be installed on PCs, Macs, iPhones, iPads and some Android devices. It allows you to block websites by categories (e.g. violence, drugs, explicit content) on the machines it is installed on.

OpenDNS

A solution for the more technically minded parent is to use a free service called OpenDNS. OpenDNS is free to use cloud-based internet filter that blocks access to inappropriate websites. You can also add your own sites to a personalised blocked list should there be any websites in particular you don't want your children to access. OpenDNS requires you to reconfigure some settings on your broadband router.

Useful links

<http://www.pcworld.com/article/2042233/how-to-child-proof-the-internet.html>

<https://www.google.co.uk/goodtoknow/familysafety/tools/>

<http://www.opendns.com>

<http://www1.k9webprotection.com/>