

Parental Control Solutions

The basic idea of parental control software is that it blocks access to websites or categories of websites that a parent may deem to be inappropriate. Parental control software may also include other features such as selecting specific times when your child can browse the Internet, or filters that block personal information from being sent from your computer. Below you will find some features that you may want to look for in a particular piece of parental control software.

Important features in parental control software

- **Website filtering by category:** Virtually all parental control software packages can filter sites based on pre-defined categories such as pornography, gambling, hate speech and others. These categories allow a parent to select the specific information they wish to filter for their child.
- **Personal information blocking:** This feature allows a parent to block personal information being sent from their computer. This is useful when you want to prevent your child from sending out personal details such as a name, phone number, or address.
- **Editable website filter list:** This feature enables parents to create their own list of sites to filter. This could be useful if you wanted to prevent your child from accessing a specific site, or list of sites.
- **Scheduling:** This feature allows parents to select specific times when their child can browse the web or chat on Instant Messaging (IM) programs.
- **Chat monitoring:** This feature allows parents to record chat sessions that take place on their own computer. Note that most chat programs allow you to do this, however parental control software may have the ability to protect the log files from deletion.

Selecting a parental control solution

A search will yield many different software packages that may include some or all of the features listed above. Before purchasing a software package, be aware that some Internet Service Providers (ISPs) will offer parental control features with a security software suite for free, or a small monthly charge. These security suites typically include other important software such as antivirus and firewall protection. Select your ISP below to visit their security software page.

Telus: www.telus.com	MTS: www.mts.ca
Shaw: www.shawsecure.shaw.ca	Eastlink: www.eastlink.ca
Rogers: www.hispeed.rogers.com	Cogeco: www.cogeco.ca
Bell: www.bell.ca	Aliant: http://productsandservice.bellaliant.net
Videotron: www.videotron.com	



Parental Control Solutions (cont'd)

If your ISP is not listed above, you may want to contact them to see if they offer such a service. If your ISP does not provide a parental control solution, there are many software vendors who sell this type of software. Much like the ISP solutions, you will frequently find security packages that include the essentials like antivirus, personal firewall, parental controls all in one piece of software. Typing the phrase “security software suite” or “parental control software” into your favourite search engine should give you a good starting point.

Search engines and filtering

Most search engines give the ability to turn on a safe searching feature. Typically this feature can be turned to a specific level to filter sites which contain inappropriate content. This can be used in combination with parental control software, although many already include a search filtering capability. Links for enabling this with search engines such as Google, Yahoo! and Bing are provided below.

Google: www.google.ca/preferences

Yahoo!: search.yahoo.com/preferences

Bing: www.bing.com/settings.aspx

Or view our demos: www.thedoorthatsnotlocked.ca/app/en/parent/5-7/filter_demos

