IDFI

Institute for Development
of Freedom of Information

Parent Guidebook on Protecting Children Online

2018

Content

Introduction

Internet and electronic devices are natural and integral parts of life for contemporary children. While this is by no means a bad thing, with digital skills being essential for success, at the same time, the internet also contains content that is inappropriate for children. Whatever position you might have on letting children use internet and electronic devices, we believe that parents should at least know how to protect their children online.

Fortunately, most electronic devices and online platforms have built-in safety features that reduce the risk of children accessing inappropriate online content.

IDFI's guidebook features the description of these functions for the most popular devices (Windows 7 and 10, Android, iPhone, iPad) and platforms (Google, Youtube and Facebook).

Google SafeSearch

Children use **Google** to search for all sorts of information. While doing so, they may encounter inappropriate content. To void this, it is preferable for parents to activate **Google's** SafeSearch function, which automatically filters harmful information.
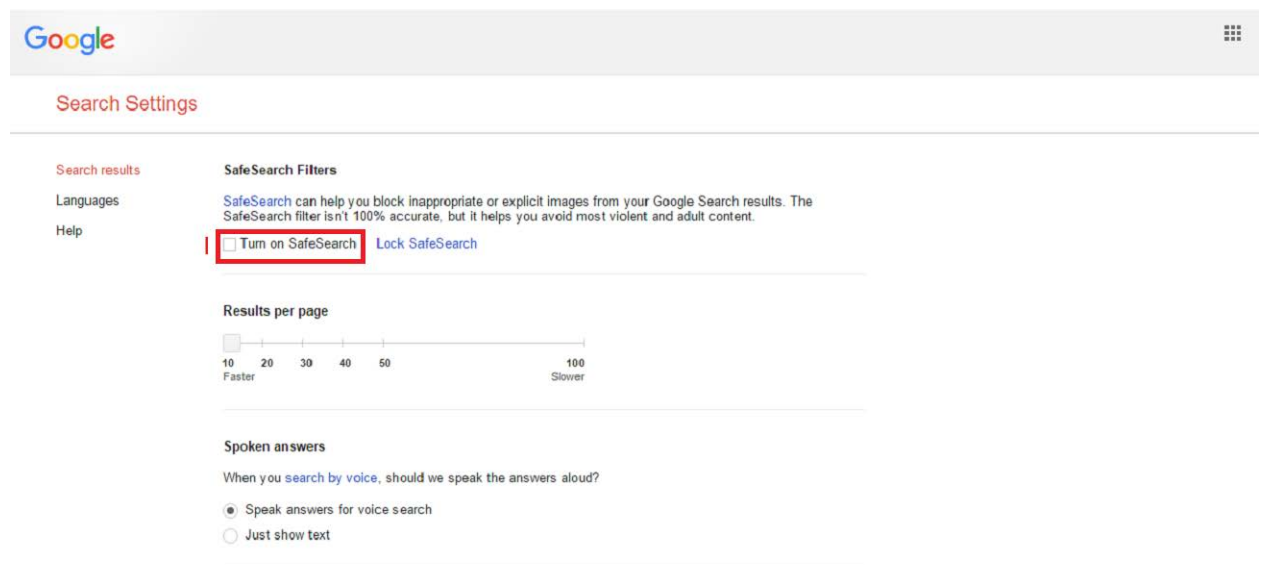
To activate the function:

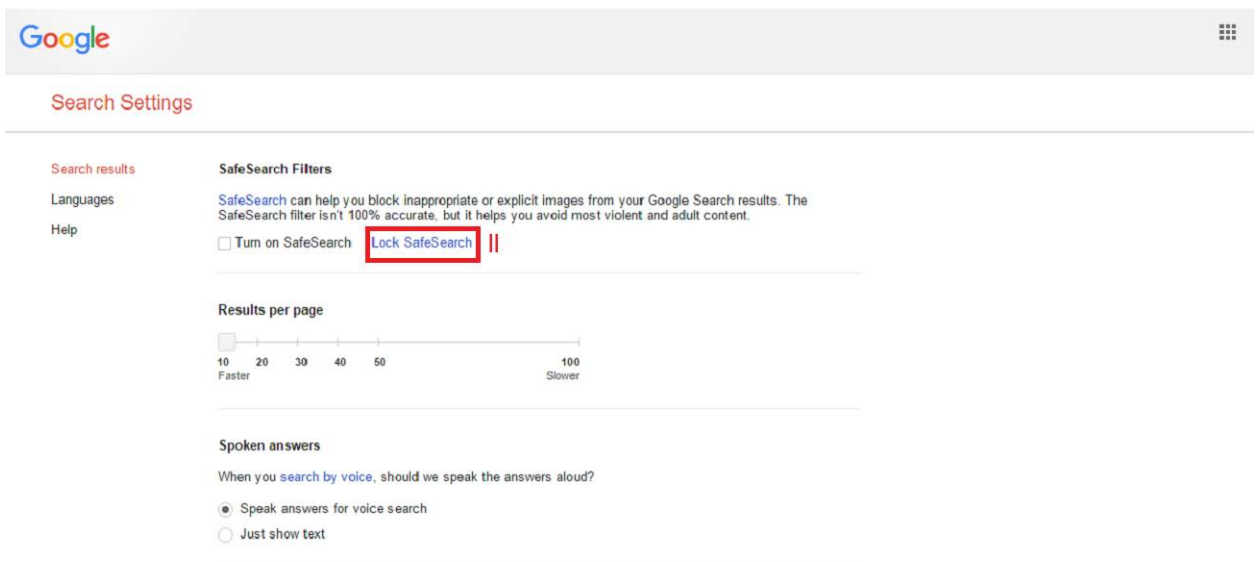***Image #1:*** *Visit http://www.google.com/preferences and select "Turn on SafeSearch"*

Image #2: In order for your child not to change selected settings, click on „Lock SafeSearch" (after that you will have to sign in to your Google account)

If you use more than one browser, you have to activate the function for each browser separately. Also, if several users, including your child, are registered on your computer, the function should be activated from each user. After activating the function, you will receive a notification in your browser window.

Activation of SafeSearch does not provide 100 percent protection, however, it significantly minimizes the risk of children accessing harmful online content.

How to use SafeSearch on Android platforms?

In case of Google app:

1. Open the app G
2. Select Menu ≡ in the upper corner ⟩ **Settings** ⟩ **Accounts & Privacy**

3. Switch the SafeSearch filter "On".

In case of telephone browser:

1. Open Search Settings
2. Find the section "SafeSearch filters"
3. Click on "Filter explicit results"
4. Click on "Save".

In case of tablet browser:

1. Open Search Settings
2. Find the section "SafeSearch filters"

3. Click on "Filter explicit results"
4. Click on "Save".

<u>**In case of Android television:**</u>

1. Open Settings from start menu
2. Find the section "Preferences" and select "Search" > SafeSearch filter
3. Click on "On".

SafeSearch in case of Google Play:

<u>**For children under 13:**</u>

Officially, an adult should be at least 13 years old to create a Google account. If you create a personal Google account for your child under 13, you should activate restrictions for his/her account from your Google account. To do this:

1. Open the Family Link app
2. Select your child's account
3. Select Manage Settings in Settings > Controls on Google Play
4. Indicate the type of content you want to filter
5. Select the type of filter or restriction

<u>**For family members over 13:**</u>

1. Open Play Store app
2. Select menu in the upper left corner > Settings > Parental Controls
3. Click on "On"
4. Enter a PIN code, in order for the child not to be able to change the settings
5. Select the type of content you want to restrict out of the options shown on the screen
6. Select the type of restriction or filter.

YouTube Safe Search System

YouTube is the most popular video portal in the world. There are approximately 400 hours of content uploaded to YouTube each minute. Despite the fact that **You**Tube administration tries to restrict videos depicting violence and pornography, you still encounter videos containing hate speech and aggressive opinions.

The best way to avoid this threat is to activate Safety Mode on all devices your child uses to watch **You**Tube. Safety Mode filters the content that is inappropriate for children.

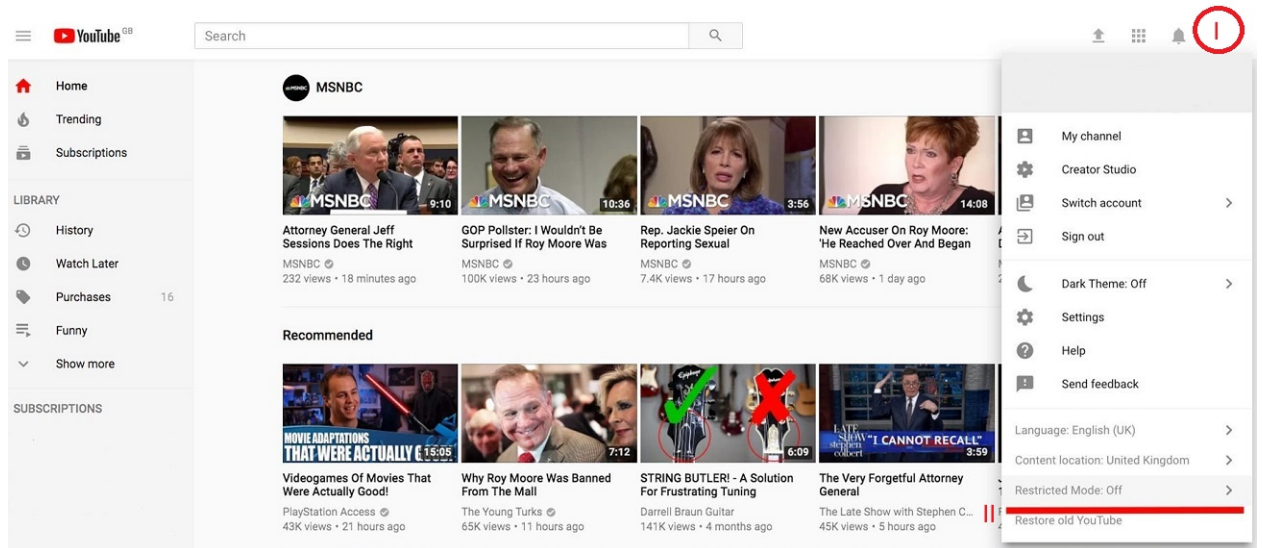# Activation of YouTube's Safe Search for Personal Computers, and IOS and Android Apps

Image #3: Open YouTube, go to your account through the button in the upper right corner of a panel, select „Restricted Mode" and activate it.
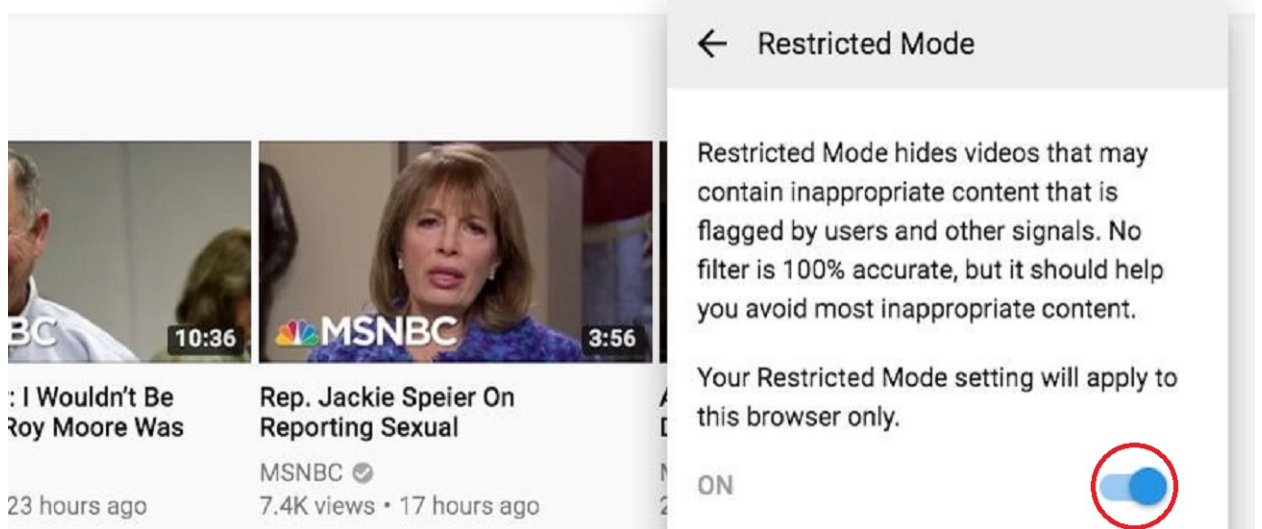

Image #4: When activating YouTube's Safety Mode, Google's Safe Search System is also automatically activated.

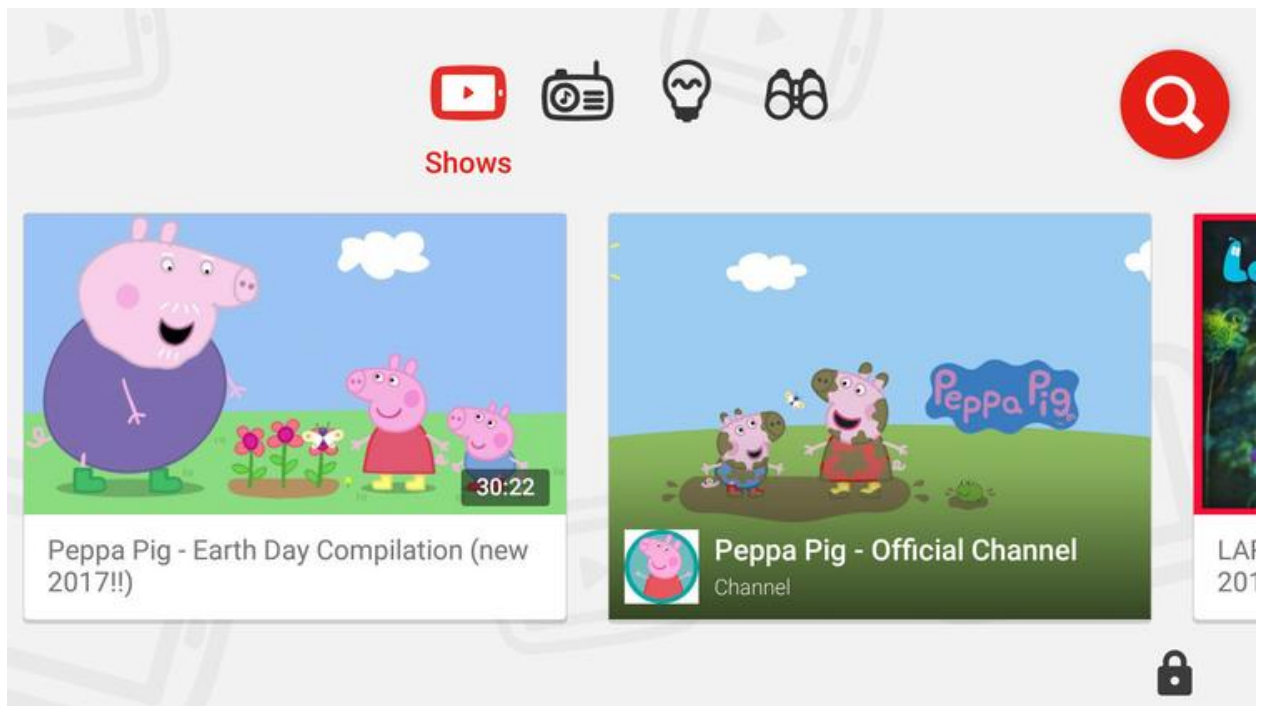An alternative to the Safe Search function is to use the **YouTube** Kids app.

*Image #5: You**Tube** Kid app*

You**Tube** Kids has a simple interface and filters kids' videos. The app is full of various cartoons, however, it still contains parodies and content with some violence. You**Tube** Kids is only an app and does not have a browser version.

In order to make You**Tube** Kids absolutely safe, open it, select "Home screen age level", and indicate the audience: whether it is a child of any age, preschool or school age.
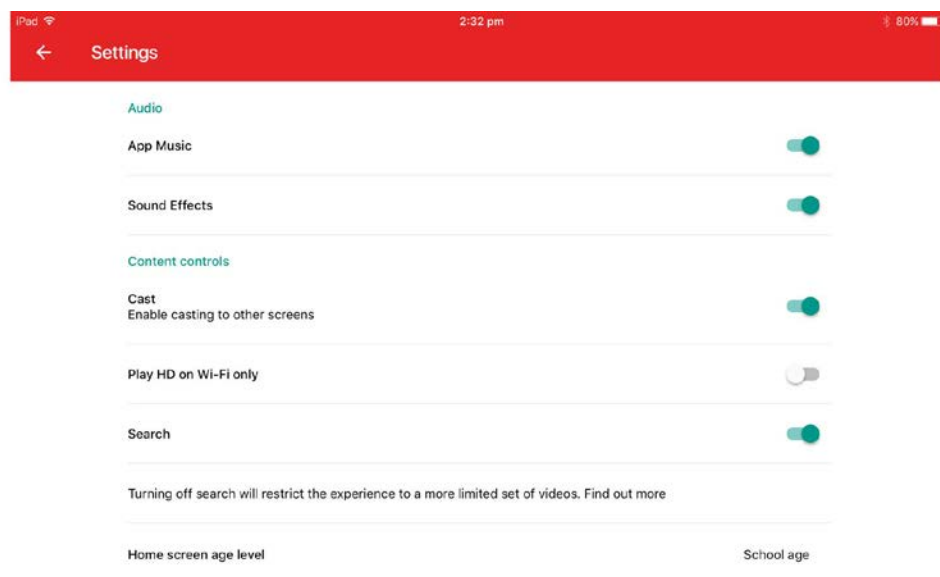

*Image #6: Open You**Tube** Kids, press "Home screen age level"*

Activation of You**Tube** Safe Search System on **iPhone and iPod Touch**

If your child uses iPhone or iPod Touch, you can activate safe search system on these devices. These devices have a YouTube app, however, safe search function is not available on it. You will be able to activate this function only in case your child uses YouTube from a browser.
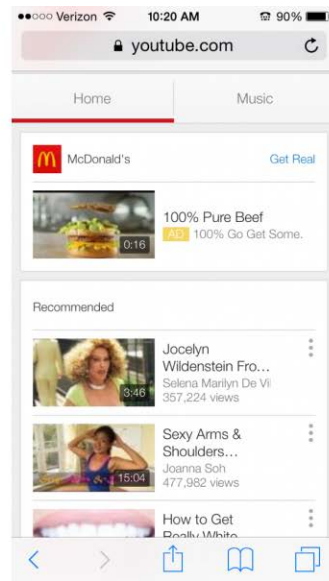

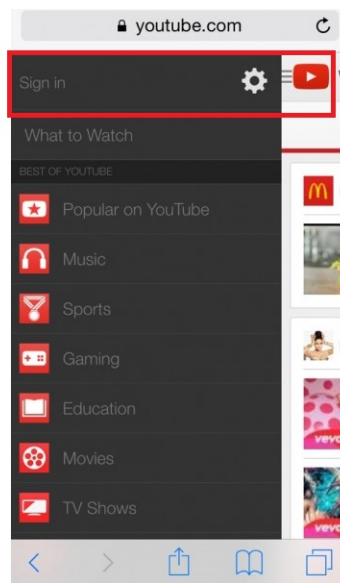*Image #7: Open browser Safari and visit www.youtube.com*

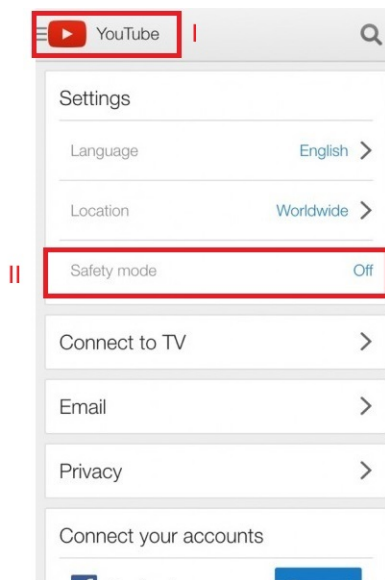*Image #8: Press **YouTube**'s logo in the upper left corner of a screen, then select "Sign in"*

Image #9: Select "Off" next to "Safety Mode" and switch to "On"

Activation of You**Tube** Safe Search on **iPad/iPad Mini**

Safe Search can be activated on the iPad only if your child watches **YouTube** from a browser. To do this:
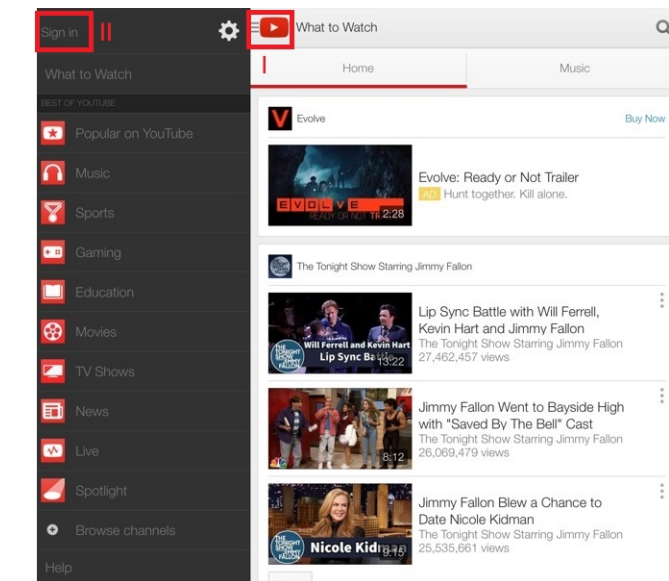

*Image #10: Open browser Safari and visit You**Tube**. Click on logo in the upper left corner of a screen and press "Sign in".*
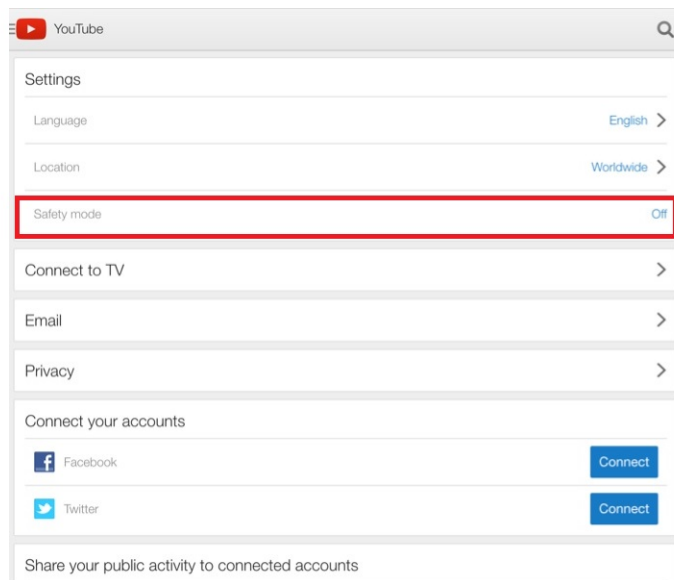
Image #11: Select the logo in the upper left corner, then select the settings button. Select "Off" under settings and then switch to "On".

Activation of Safe Search of the YouTube App on Android

No matter what device you are using, whether smartphone or tablet, steps for activation of safe search are the same. To activate:
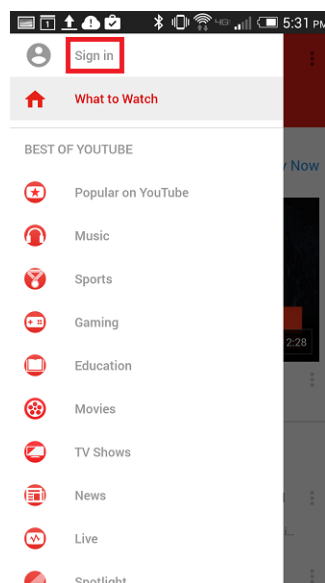

Image #12: Open the YouTube app and select the button in the upper left corner of a screen (YouTube Icon) and then select - "Sign in"
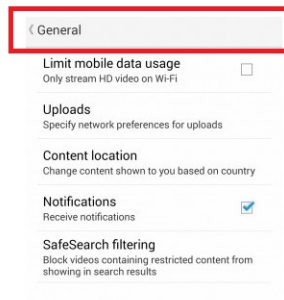
Image #13: Select the button ☰ *in the upper right corner and go to settings, then find the section "General"*
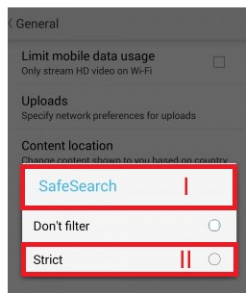

Image #14: Select SafeSearch, then - "Strict"

Facebook Safe Mode System

Facebook is not a fully adjusted to children's needs. For this reason, the minimum age to create a Facebook account is 13. Facebook does not have functions to filter content or any other parental controls. In addition, Facebook friends significantly determine the content that is displayed in each user's news feed.

Considering these factors, parents are advised to regulate security settings of their child's Facebook account instead. IDFI prepared a separate guidebook on how to do this.

Activation of Safety Mode on Windows 7

Apart from online platforms, computer devices, including personal computers, smartphones and tablets, also have in-built safety functions. This function helps you control how much time your child uses a device and his/her access to particular games and programs. In case of Windows 7, to activate safety mode:
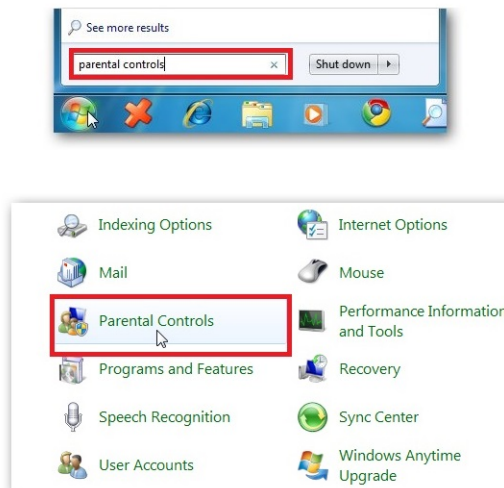

Image #15: Open *"Start Menu" and find "Parental Controls" or open "Control Panel" and then - "Parental Controls"*
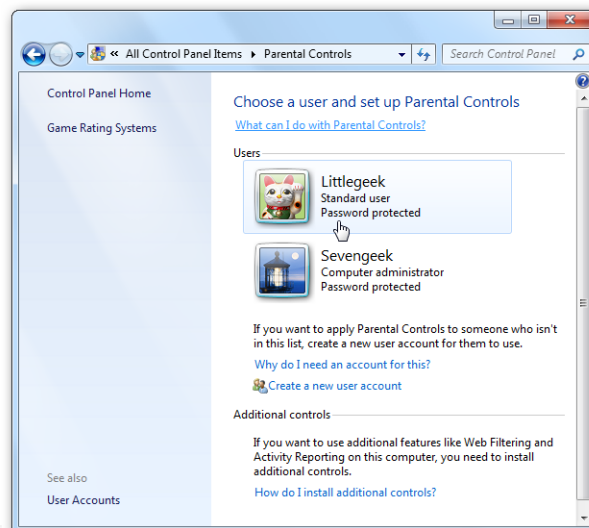

Image #16: Select your child's account, on which you want to activate safety mode.
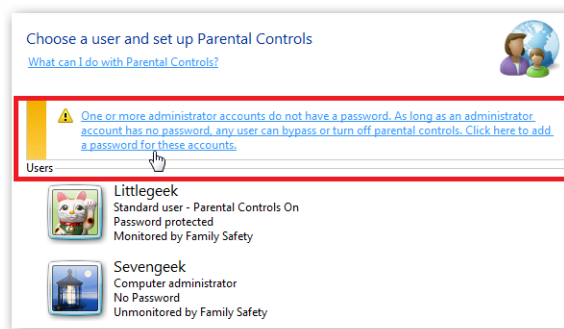
Image #17: Make sure that the administrator's account is protected with a password. Otherwise, a child will be able to switch off the function and use a computer without restrictions. If the administrator's account is not protected with a password, click on a notification.
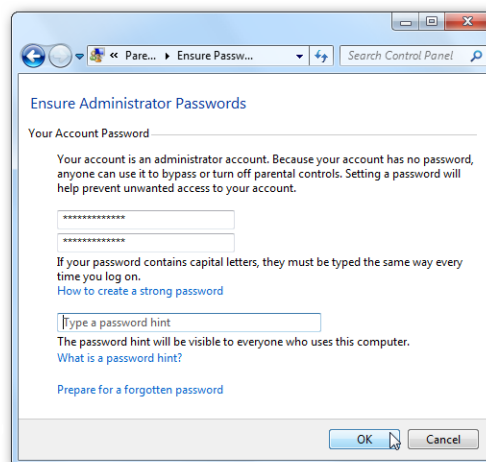

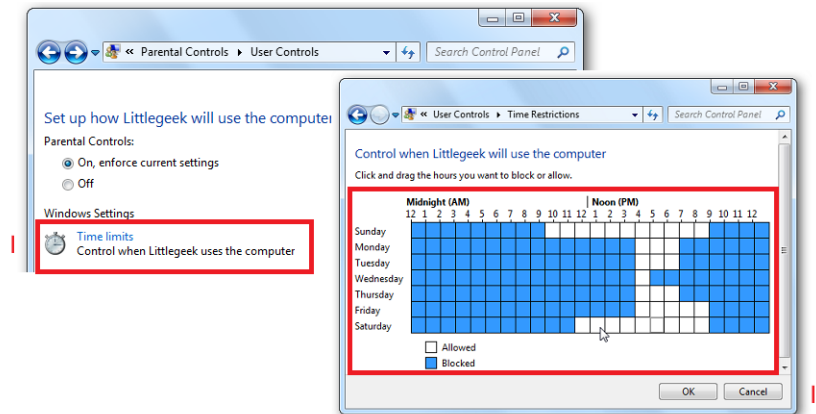*Image #18: The system will request to set a password.*

Image #19: To control how much time your child can use a computer – select "Time limits". If you want your child to use computer only for a few hours a day, select/block all periods of a day, when your child is restricted from using the computer.
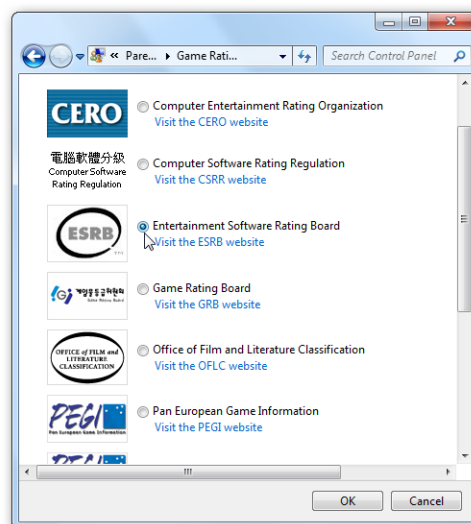

Image #20: To control your child's access to games, click on "Games". You can either fully restrict access to games or select allowed games according to various rankings or names.
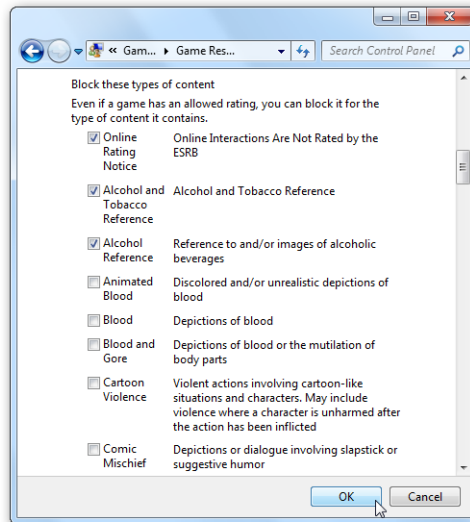
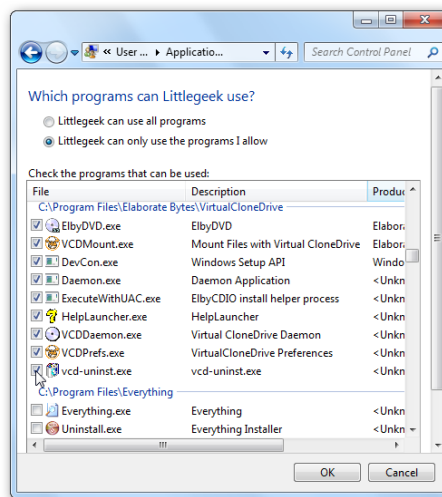*Image #21:* Also, you can block games based on their content.

Image #22: If you want to block access to specific program, select "Allow and block specified programs", review the list and block any programs you want.

Additional Control Mechanisms

Windows 7 does not have a web filter (unlike Windows Vista). If you want to have additional control mechanisms, for instance, web filter, filtering irrelevant content and Activity Reports, you can install Windows Live Family Safety. You will be able to limit access to particular websites, as well as get reports about the websites your child visited.

Image #23: Additional control mechanisms

It is possible to see activity reports distantly (for instance, from a computer at your workplace). Also, you can distantly make changes to settings. For this purpose, select "Activity reporting" and make relevant changes.
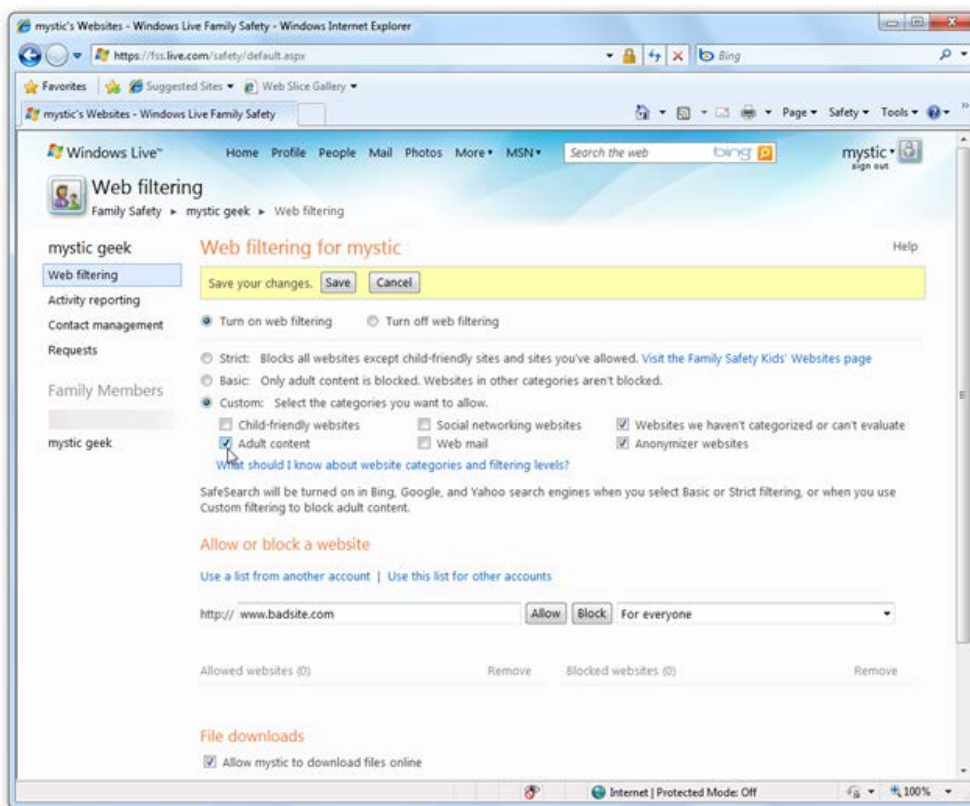

Image #24: See activity reports

Activation of Safety Mode on Windows 10

Microsoft offers "Family Security Settings" on Windows 10. This function enables parents to create an account for their child, restrict his/her access to particular content and set time limits on a device. To activate:
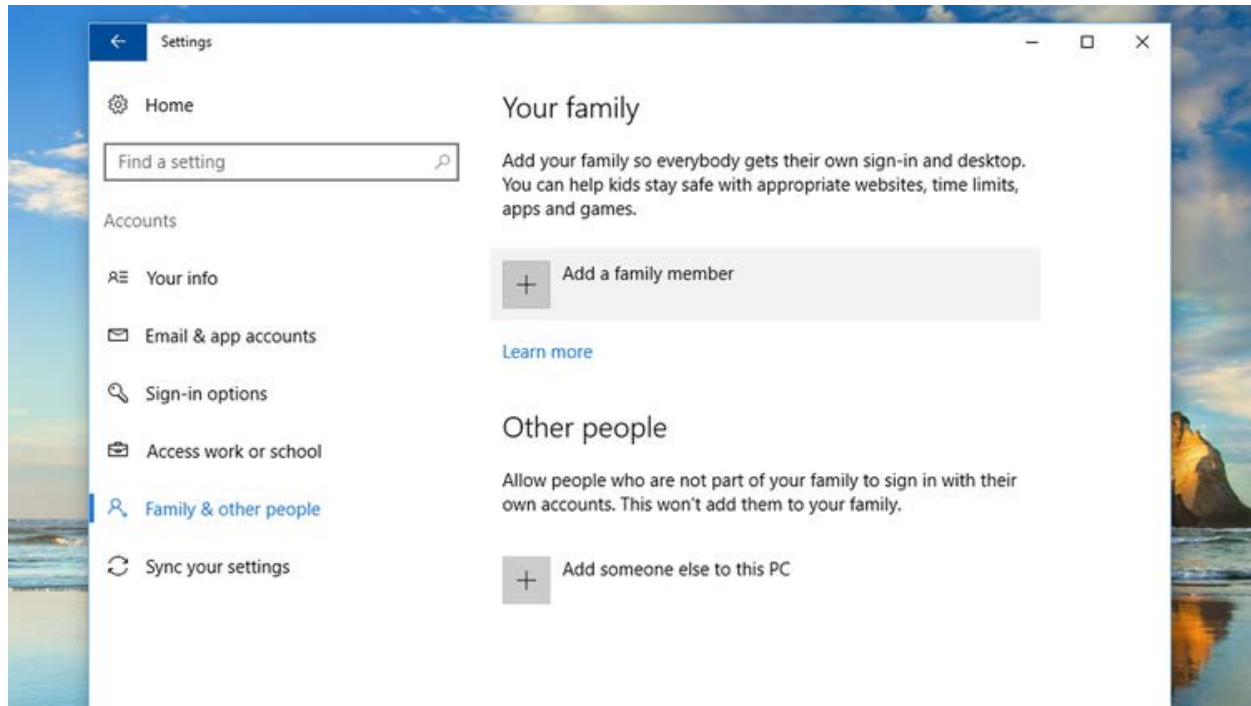

Image #25: *Open "Settings" and select "Accounts", find "Family & other people" on the left side, click on it and then click on "Add a family member"*
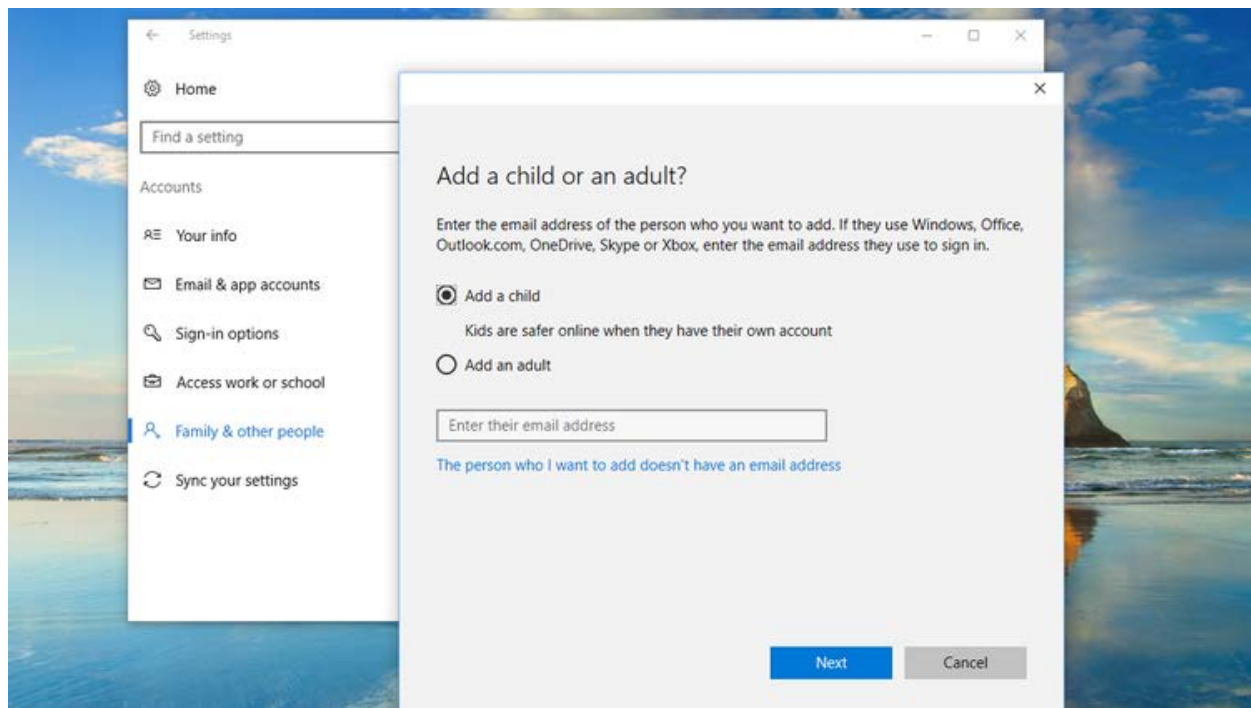
*Image #26: You will see a menu, through which you can add an account of a child or an adult. Select "Add a child",
then – "The person who I want to add doesn't have an email address"*

The system will request from you to create an email account for your child. Indicate details in relevant fields and add a telephone number for security reasons.

To change settings of an account, click on "Manage family settings online" under the newly created account. It will redirect you to the Microsoft website, with a list of accounts of your family members. On the right side of each account there is a list, from which you can check activities, expenses, time spent at the computer, etc. Also, clicking the "More" button enables you to open a web browser filter.
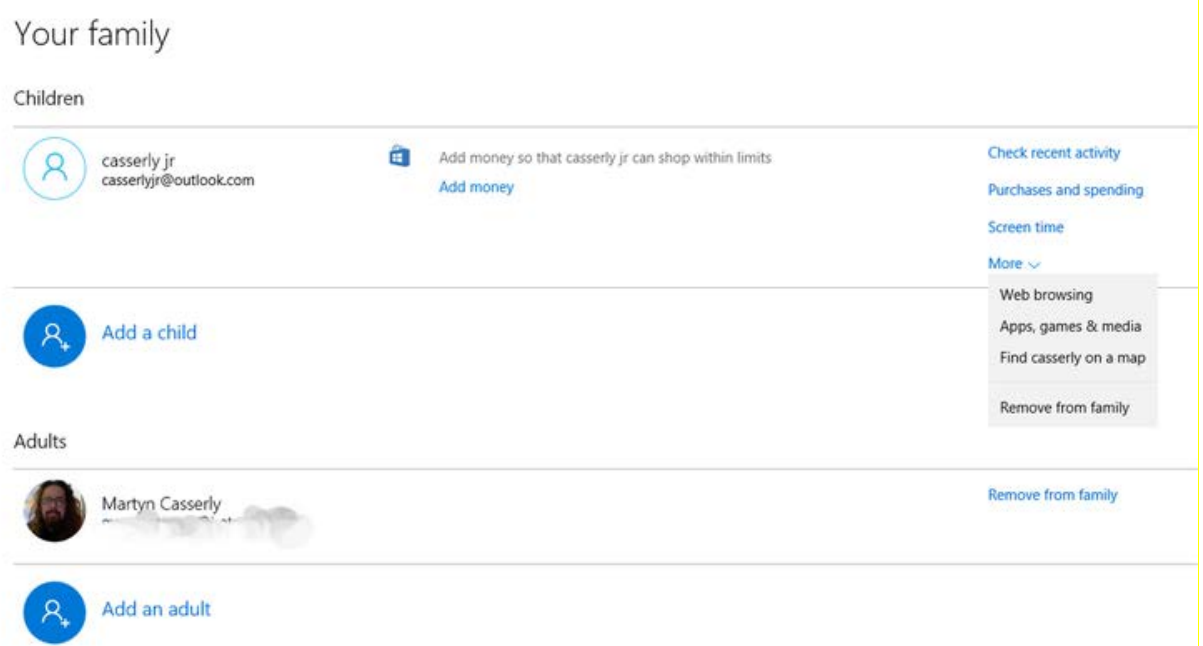

Image #27: Accounts of your family members.

The web browser filter will protect your child from inappropriate websites and content. It enables you to create a list of permitted websites, as well as prohibited websites. It also filters the content your child encounters on Windows store (Windows online shop). You can indicate a specific age, and content will be filtered based on this age through the filter.

"Screen Time" is a useful function as well. It helps you control how much time you child uses the computer during the day. You can set specific time limits for when your child is allowed to use the computer.
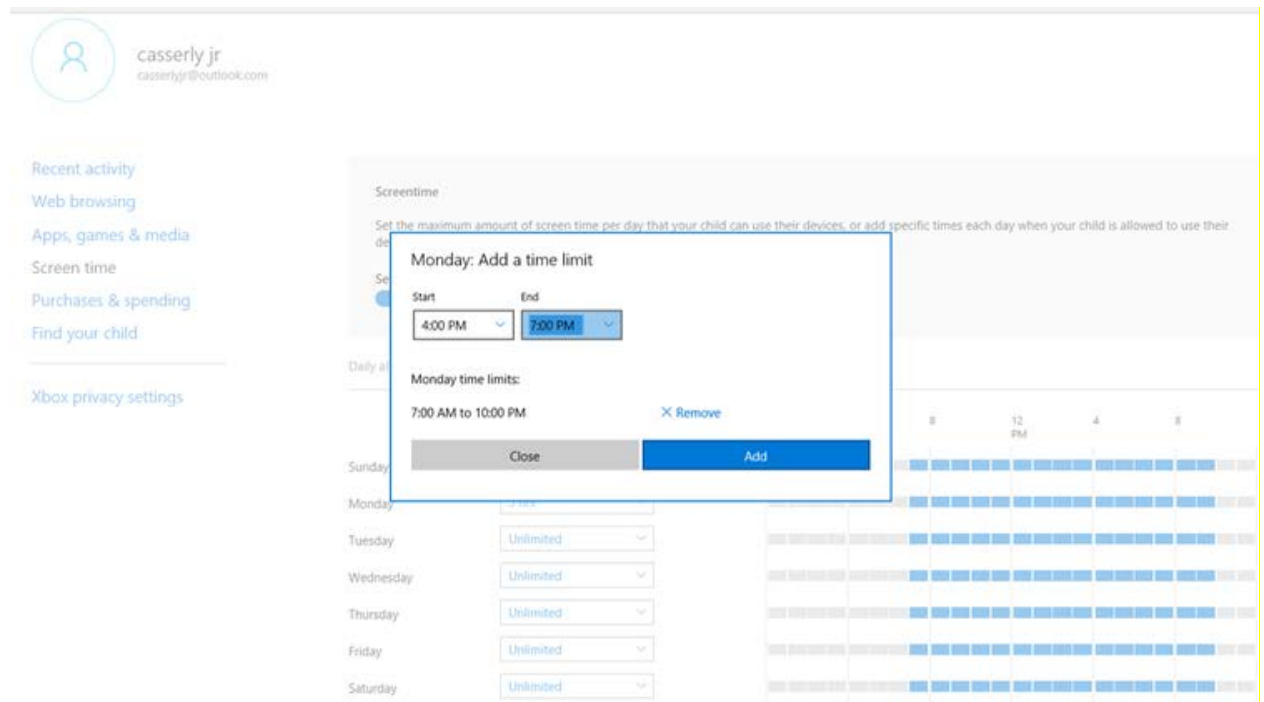

Image #28: Time limit function

Activation of Safety Mode on Android Devices

This mode works on Android 5.0 (or following versions) (in case of iPad 4.3 or following versions)

The user interface on different versions of Android is not identical, meaning that the setting button may be located in different places. However, the process to activate safety mode is the same. The first step is to find User Settings.
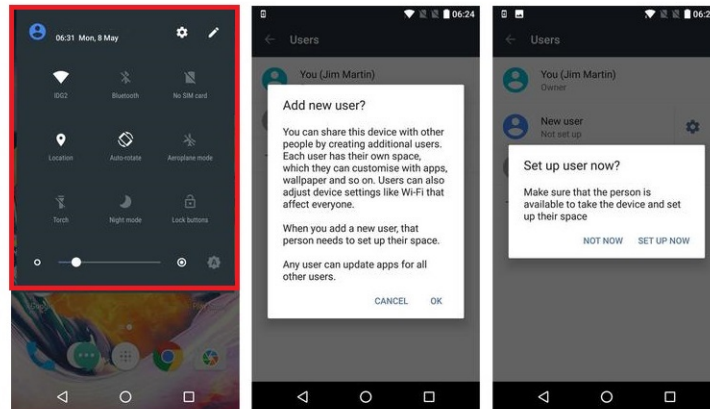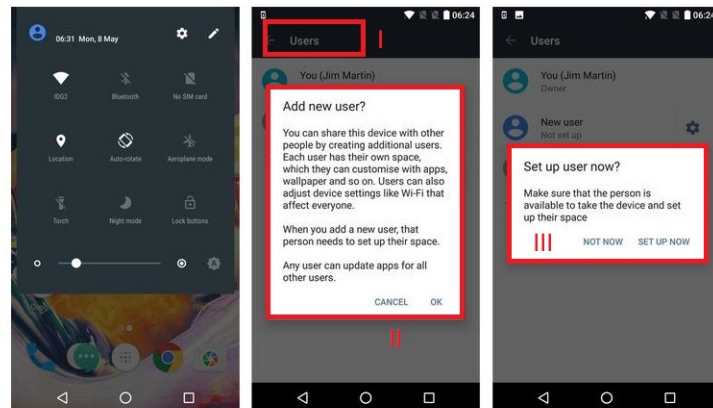
Image #29: Swipe down to reveal the settings.

Image #30: Open settings and find "Users". You will find your account or a major account of a mobile owner. Here you will see a button "Add user" to add a new account. Select it and click on "ok", then - "Set up now". You will be automatically signed out and requested to sign in with a new account (in this case with your child's account).
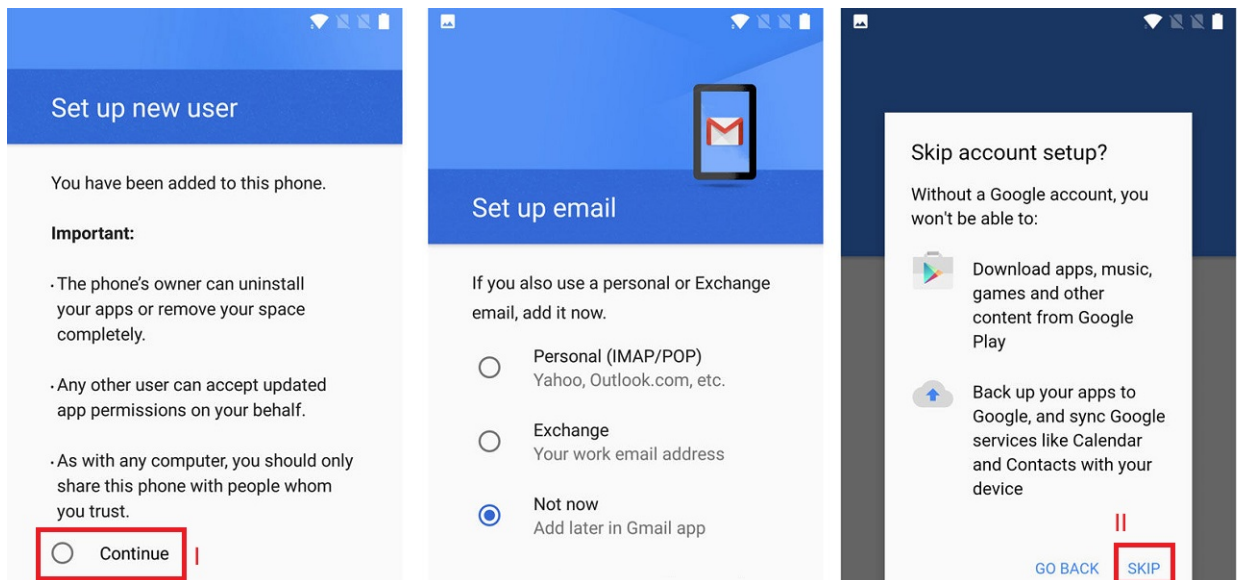
Image #31: Select "Continue" in the upper side, the system will ask you whether you want to sign in with an Android account. If you do not want your child to download apps, music, games, videos, etc., click on "Skip Setup". Afterwards, you will be able to download apps with your account.

Activation of Parental Controls on iPhone and iPad

To activate parental controls on iPhone/iPad:

Image #32: Open Settings and select "Restrictions", then select "Enable Restrictions"

Image #33: *After that, you can de-activate the functions/apps you consider inappropriate for your child. You can also restrict access of a device to particular music or TV shows from iTunes*

Image #34: *Set a password to make sure your child is unable to change the settings*