

HOW TO PRESERVE THE FAMILY

DIGITAL GUIDELINES

Our Mission & Vision

Protect, Sanctify, and Preserve Our Families, Through Wise Use of the Internet

In Captain Moroni's day, walls and defensive fortifications were built for protection against enemies. (see Alma 49:5) building such fortifications in our day will not protect individuals and families from current-day threats. We therefore urge every family to defend their home against easy pornography access and establish accountability in the use of media so all may be worthy to enjoy the blessings of the Holy Temple.

"The world can be a challenging and difficult place in which to live. We are often surrounded by that which would drag us down. As you and I go to the holy houses of God, as we remember the covenants we make within, we will be more able to bear every trial and to overcome each temptation. In this sacred sanctuary we will find peace; we will be renewed and fortified."

— President Thomas S. Monson — April 2011

OUR PURPOSE

In our culture, it is common to provide media access to our children while they are young, and then allow them to enjoy enormous technology power. However, establishing accountability with our children's use of electronic devices is not so common. The reality of this culture is the cost and damage to lives that come from great power without accountability. The culture we hope to create is one where parents balance the media power of their children with protection and accountability. Accountability is a celestial principle. and is a key to true freedom.

Many parents are eager to preserve their family, but do not know how to enact protections or establish accountability. While it is true that we cannot rely on filters to completely prevent unwanted access, and no program is foolproof, there are many things we can do to protect our families from easily accessible dangers. We must do our best to provide as safe an environment as possible to enable spiritual growth. For this purpose, we offer information and guidelines for parents to enable us and better protect and preserve our family.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARENTS

- **Communicate with children regularly about media use.** All accountability is rooted in loving, open communication between parents and children. Shaming and harsh reactions shut down essential future communication. Encourage children to report when they have seen something inappropriate.
- **Use filters to protect internet use.**
- **Set guidelines on when and where youth may go online.** Some parents set time restrictions, have devices turned in overnight (such as using a family “charging basket”), or prohibit online access in private, secluded locations.
- **Maintain full parental access to all family devices.** Parents own devices, children use them. Parents should know ALL passwords on devices (and social media accounts) and should monitor regularly how their children use them.
- **Monitor app usage, social media, and gaming—consider regulating their access.** Some parents use app locking apps that require passwords for selected apps (some of these options are free). Parents can also require a password for app purchases.

To preserve their families, we recommend that parents establish accountability by protecting two realms: home networks and individual devices.

To learn more about raising children in a digital world, please see the [“Digital Parenting”](#) page. To hear what counsel our leaders offer, based on their experience with casualties of digital dangers, please see the [“Advice from Leaders”](#) page.

THE HOME NETWORK

- Parents can go a long way to protect their family by protecting their home network. All online access in a home passes through a router. Parents can access equipment or software that filters and monitors all information accessed through that router. Some options some parents use to do this include:
 - [Disney Circle](#): costs about \$90 (one-time fee) for a device that filters everything that passes through your router and can monitor all devices that access your home network.
 - [Router Limits](#): (About \$80 for a device similar to Disney Circle)
 - [eero router](#): (\$149-\$499 for router(s), \$9.99/mo for monitoring)
 - [OpenDNS](#): requires learning and is not overly simple, but is very powerful, free for families, and requires no additional equipment. OpenDNS blocks access to

websites by intercepting the name lookup. For information, go to <https://support.opendns.com/entries/53936430>.

We strongly recommend that you choose a hardware option (i.e. [Router Limits](#) or [Disney Circle](#)) to protect your home network.

PERSONAL DEVICES

- A great resource for parents is the following PC Magazine article: <http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2346997,00.asp>. Some of the many available product options and their associated costs include:
 - [Net Nanny](#) (\$59.99/year for 5 devices, \$89.99/year for 10 devices)
 - [Qustodio](#) (\$49.95/year for five children with 5 devices, \$87.95/year for 10 children and with devices)
 - [Disney Circle Go](#) (\$9.95/month for up to 10 devices anywhere. Must already have the Disney Circle device)
 - [Router Limits](#) (\$9.99/month to monitor devices when they are on a network other than the home Wi-Fi. Must already have Router Limits device in the home—see above)
 - [Norton Family Premier](#) (\$49/year for 10 devices, \$39/year for 5 devices)
 - [Covenant Eyes](#): (\$12.50/month for a filter and accountability report sent to someone you choose as an individual, or \$14.99/month for a family filter)... this could bless an adult who wishes to self-initiate an accountability structure for themselves.
 - [Cisco Umbrella](#): (Formerly OpenDNS Umbrella, \$38/year) offers protection for all your devices on any network.
 - [Mobicip](#): (Free or \$39.99/year) Parental Controls for phones, tablets and computers. Works on iOS, Android, Windows, Mac, and Chromebook
 - [OurPact](#): (Free or \$1.99/mo, iOS, Android) set mobile device time limits, create schedules, block all Internet and app use at a moment's notice or reward them with the allowance feature.
 - [NetAngel](#): (Free plan: monitor internet and text messages on one device. Premium Plan: \$15/month for unlimited devices)
 - [IMLock](#): (\$8.99/month for 5 devices, many plans available)

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ADBLOCK PLUS

adblockplus.org

MICROSOFT FAMILY

account.microsoft.com/family

K9

k9webprotection.com

OPEN DNS

opendns.com

ROUTER LIMITS

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCa044OHxsIYYQalGTCxJy5w>

Pornography is a big problem, but it is not bigger than the Savior can handle. If someone is in the grasp of pornography, there is a way out with total and complete healing through the help of the Jesus Christ.

Create an environment of open and honest communication. It is not easy being open with others about a struggle so personal and to do it is a great sign of desire and humility. Resist the urge to chastise a daughter or son who confides in you. Shame does not motivate people to change or repent. Show an increase in love, kindness, and concern, and then get busy helping them. Parental involvement in healing and repenting is vital for youth.

When an adult has a problem, a loving, supportive spouse can do wonders. A spouse will learn much about the Savior's power in their own lives. We must sustain a spouse who is in a supportive role.

When youth confess problems that involve technology, they usually report that they have no rules or that parents are not enforcing rules because they trust their children. The lack of accountability is astounding. Children are blessed when parents understand human nature, enact rules, and enforce them.

Parents must counsel with each other and with their family and develop a plan to protect their home.

Establish technology standards early with children.

A filter in every home is a minimum standard. Every home should have some type of internet filter. But even with a filter, parents should know that a filter does not replace [courageous parenting](#).

Youth should NOT have their phones and personal devices in their bedrooms overnight. If they want to read scriptures in their rooms at night, let it be paper scriptures. If they use their phone as an alarm, get an alarm clock.

Some professionals teach that we should use the B-L-A-S-T principle. Beware of accessing the internet when you are Bored, Lonely, Angry, Stressed, or Tired.

F.A.Q.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

LDS TECH RESOURCES

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints has posted advice for families regarding technology on the LDS Tech resource page on [lds.org](#) here:

http://tech.lds.org/wiki/Family_safety_with_technology

CREATING A FAMILY TECHNOLOGY PLAN

A fantastic resource, this PDF document steps families through the process of creating a technology plan. Many resources in this document inspired resources on this page.

<http://www.byui.edu/Documents/.../MaxfieldB-Creating-Family-Technology%20Plan.pdf>

COMMON SENSE MEDIA

A website offering tips, advice, articles, and solutions for parents and families in a 24/7 media world. Includes advice by age (2-17) or entertainment type, as well as reviews of common games, movies, TV shows, apps, and other media (not a church-sponsored site).

<http://www.commonsensemedia.org/advice-for-parents/>

PROTECT MY FAMILY ONLINE

A father took it upon himself to educate others in an effort similar to the intent of this website. He offers excellent articles, tips, and product reviews:

<https://protectmyfamily.online>

OVERCOMING PORNOGRAPHY

A Church-sponsored website that provides information and tips about protecting and healing families from the dangers and effects of pornography through Jesus Christ.

<http://www.overcomingpornography.org>

MORMON CHANNEL: TECH SAVVY

A collection of videos highlighting the latest technology, how to use it, what the Church is doing with it, and ways to use it for good. Includes segments on blogging, Internet, and Social Media as well as Family Fun with Technology, Sharing Your Faith Online, and Parenting in the Tech Age.

<http://www.mormonchannel.org/tech-savvy>