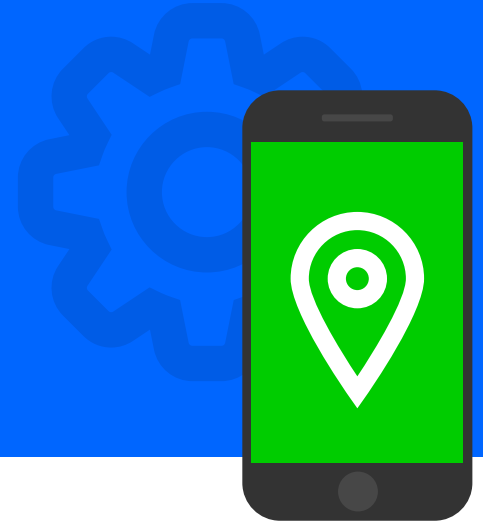


Guide to tech: Using tracking and location settings on kids devices

Here's what you need to consider before deciding to share your child's location on their device and how to best use apps that offer location tracking.



Which devices?

Some phones come equipped with software that **can track your child's location**, for example the Monqi phone. Others have settings specific to the phone that can switch your child's location services on and off so that apps are not able to share their location.

Age and privacy

Lots of parents want to see where their younger children are when they're out alone or with friends, using a well-known app like Boomerang or Qustodio. **However, as children get older, they will want to find their own independence** so it's important to have regular conversation about how best to use this tool to support them.

App access

Be aware of which apps your child uses as some can reveal their location to lots of people, for example Snapchat maps. You can design privacy settings that are right for you for them by blocking some apps from accessing your child's location, while enabling others.

Real time updates

If you feel like your child is vulnerable to sharing too much online, **you can install apps to monitor what they are sharing and with whom**. Encourage your children to not share their location or images in real-time so they don't give away their location to people they don't know.

Location zones

Some apps give you the option to set boundaries of where your child can go when they are out and about. This can be a good tool to establish boundaries with your child and as they get older and gain more independence. It's a good idea to schedule in checkpoints of when to review the boundaries set so they work for both of you.

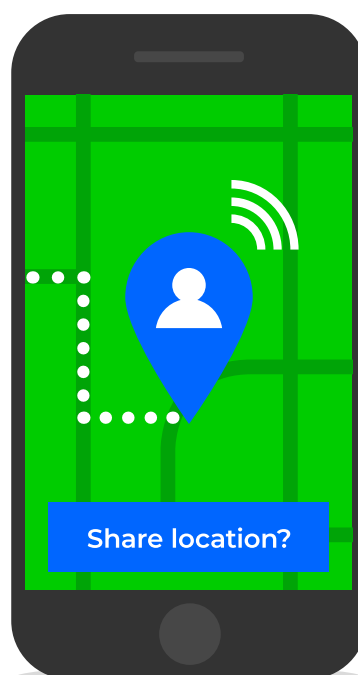
Apps have limitations

You'll never be able to fully monitor your child's whereabouts through their phone, so it's important to create an environment where your child is able to share what they've been up to and any concerns they may have.

Building trust

No app can make up for a lack of trust. Whether you decide to disable the location settings within the phone, or install apps specifically designed to help you keep track of your child's location, you should be honest and open with your child.

It's vital you tell them whether you're tracking their movements or not, and the reasons behind it. You can set rules about when you will be checking their location, for example if they are late home or not responsive.



Top apps for location tracking



iOS 12 for iPhone and iPad

Screen Time features built into the iOS 12 for iPhone and iPad devices offer great family controls for free and at the operating system level.



Monqi phone

Monqi is an all-in-one solution. It's a smartphone that has controls built into the handset. At £149 it's not cheap, but that price includes the device as well.



Boomerang

As with other apps, it includes location tracking with updates on your child's whereabouts via their mobile device. It works only on iOS and Android devices.



Family Time

This is an app you install on each of your devices that lets you control exactly what your child can do online. You can also track movement and set zones that will alert you if the child leaves them. The app is limited to iOS, Android and Kindle devices.



OurPact

User-friendly App that can track calls, and texts and monitor a range of online activities. There are three subscription plans: Free, Plus, and Premium. The Premium option allows you to access all its features.