

Overview

Social Networking sites present a challenge for parental control products, since filters typically only block entire social networks – not individual pages within a network. So parents have to decide if they want to block all social networking, or allow all social networking and rely on monitoring software to flag problem behavior or contacts. Nearly all Internet parental control products offer the ability to block specific websites, so if all you want is to block access to popular social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace, you do not need a specialized program for social networks – a good filtering product will do. But if you want detailed reporting on social networking activity, you'll probably want more of a monitoring product such as Spector Pro or Norton Family Online.

We Recommend:

Ages up to 13: Social Networks are not recommended for this age group, use a filter to block.

Ages 14 to 17: Several products specialize in monitoring behavior on social networks, including Norton Family, McAfee Family, and Spector Pro.

Important Features

- ✓ **Auto Alert.** Can be programmed to send automatic e-mail alerts triggered by specific events, such as an inappropriate profile or receiving inappropriate messages.
- ✓ **Block Private Info.** Can be configured to blocks the transmission of private information such as name, phone number, etc. via IM and e-mail. Some programs monitor for the display of private information, but send an alert message through e-mail rather than blocking the information.
- ✓ **Contact Management.** Control over who which members of a social network can contact your children via social networks.
- ✓ **Monitor Social Network Visits.** Provides a detailed report of online activities while a child visits a social network.
- ✓ **Social Network E-mail Block and Monitor.** Ability to block or monitor e-mail accessed through a social network. (If the social network itself is blocked, the social network e-mail would of course be blocked)
- ✓ **Social Network Chat Block and Monitor.** Allows blocking or monitoring of Instant Messaging within social networks. (If the social network itself is blocked, the social network IM would of course be blocked)
- ✓ **Screen Capture.** Ability to record screen captures of all Internet activity.
- ✓ **MySpace, Facebook, Bebo, and Twitter Management.** The program has specific built-in options for managing these social network programs.

Product	Average Reviews (w/ links)	Cost (USD)	Block list of SN s	Monitor SN visits	Multi profile	Time Mgmt	Auto Alert	SN Contact Mgmt	Block Private Info	SN Email Block	SN E-mail Monitor	SN Chat Block	Screen capture	SN Chat Monitor	My Space Mgmt	Face Book Mgmt	BeBo Mgmt	Twitter Mgmt	Vista	XP	Mac
McAfee Family	★★★★★	\$39.99	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Alerts	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Net Nanny	★★★★★	\$49.95	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Norton Family	★★★★★	FREE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Safe Eyes	★★★★★	\$49.95	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Alerts	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Spector Pro	★★★★★	\$99.95	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Guardian	★★★★½	\$39.95	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
PC Pandora	★★★	\$69.95	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
IM View		\$59.95	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
PC Tattle Tale		\$49.95	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
WebWatcher		\$97.00	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No