

## **1. What is Family Link?**

Family Link is an app from Google that allows you to set-up, manage and monitor a Google account and Android device for your child so even young children can take advantage of the benefits of having a smartphone or tablet.

## **2. What does Family Link do?**

The app gives you the ability to manage what apps your kids can use and when they can use them, what websites they can visit, and when they can use the device. Parents can set a device's "bedtime" so that it can't be used for anything except phone calls during specific hours of the day or night.

## **3. What do I need to set up a Family Link account?**

You need a compatible Android smartphone or tablet for your child and either an Android or Apple phone or tablet for yourself to manage your child's account. You can manage some of your child's account settings from a web browser, but need an Android device for some features and settings. You'll also need have your own Google account.

## **4. What are the minimum and maximum ages of kids who can use Family Link?**

The app doesn't have a minimum age. It's up to parents to decide when their child is ready to have a managed smartphone. For Family Link users, Google will notify both the parent and the child before the child's 13th birthday, "to encourage a family conversation around when the child will be ready to take control over their own account and device." The child has the option to transition to a regular account or remain under parent management up until their 18th birthday.

## **5. Why should my family use Family Link?**

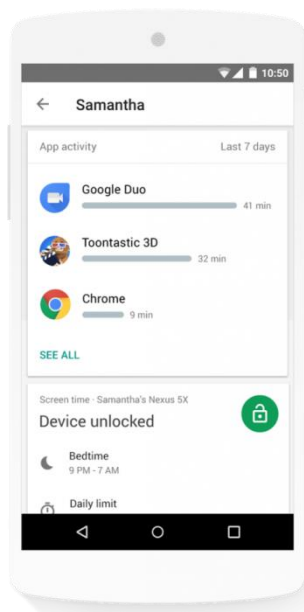
There are a great many benefits to smartphones and tablets, even for very young children. We can't list them all, but they include the ability to make calls and send and receive texts and emails with family members, the ability to use educational apps or games, the ability to take and share pictures, track health and fitness data, and much more. Also, it's possible to configure your child's phone so that it securely reports its location to you, which means you know where the phone is and, if the phone is with your child, where the child is as well. Of course, you could give your child a device without Family Link but then you wouldn't have the ability to manage the apps they use, the sites they visit, and the times they're using it, and be able to monitor how your child is using the phone. Family Link helps your child learn how to responsibly use their device while giving parents extra peace of mind.

## **6. Who can manage my child's account?**

By default, it's just the person who sets up the account but the family manager can add another family member to serve as a second parent who can manage and monitor the child's device.

## 7. What should I say to my child before installing Family Link?

It is always a good idea to have a discussion with your child before allowing them to use a device and before using any monitoring or device management tool. Remind your child about their responsibility to use the device appropriately and to take good care of the device. Explain any family ground rules and policies, and talk with them about the features in Family Link so they understand what information you can monitor and how you will be able to manage what they can do with their device. If you elect to limit the apps and sites they use, explain how they can ask permission if they come across an app or site that they would like you to add.



### Setting up Family Link

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- Allow about a half hour to complete the process and, ideally, be in a place where you have access to Wi-Fi as there may be some required software updates for the child's phone. Ideally the parent and child should do this together, but you can set it up without the child present if necessary.
  - You have the option to configure Family Link directly from the child's device or from your own Android or iOS device or, with limited functionality, from the web.

If you elect to set up Family Link from your child's device:

- When a child under 13 attempts to create a Google account, they are notified that their parent needs to sign in with their own Google account to approve it, and that the parent will be connected to their account until they turn 13.
- If you sign in as a parent you are shown the supervision and management capabilities that are available to you. You will also learn that certain features require you to use the Family Link app on your own device (e.g. a parent needs the Family Link app on their own phone in order to manage screen time, see location and remotely approve apps).

If you elect to set up Family Link from your device:

- On the parent's device, download the Family Link app from the Google Play store or Apple App Store.
- Sign into the Family Link app with your own Google account.
- Create a new Google account for your child from within Family Link (it's not possible to use a child's existing account with Family Link).
- Grab your child's compatible Android device and follow the instructions to set up the account. Make sure you have your own Google account password handy.

Make sure your and your child's phones are nearby during the setup process. At some point you may have the option to register some device protection options for your child's device

(PIN, fingerprint, etc.). You will also need to help your child pick a password that you can both remember.

When the child's account is active, you'll see an initial screen with default apps. There is a checkmark next to each approved app. Review that list and uncheck any apps that you don't want your child to use (you can always edit this list later).

## **Manage settings for a child's phone**

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Parents can use the Family Link app from their device to manage and monitor their child's device. You should take a look at the default settings and think about whether they're right for your child. If not, make any appropriate changes.

### **Settings menu puts parents in control**

Family link gives parents the ability to:

- Manage purchases and downloads on Google Play store
- Set limits on app use based on ratings from the Entertainment Software Rating Board
- Set limits on movies and TV shows based on the same familiar rating systems used in theatres and by TV stations
- Limit the types of books your child can download
- Control the type of music your child can stream or download (content labelled "explicit" is blocked by default)
- Control search options (Google Safe Search is on by default) and limit the websites your child can visit in Google's Chrome browser with the option to 1) allow all sites, 2) try to block mature sites (default), or 3) only allow for certain sites on a list you approve. As the app says, "no filter is perfect" but the default settings should help hide sexually explicit and violent sites
- Control your child's ability to share photos (it's on by default)
- Control who can manage Google's recording of data activity (child and parent by default but can be limited to only parents)
- Review and control your child's access to microphone, camera, location and contacts
- Set screen time limits, including the amount of time or the time(s) when your child can and can't use the device. (The device will always be able to send or receive calls)
- Lock or unlock your child's phone at any time. Locked phones can only be used to make or receive phone calls
- Control over apps
- Parents have some control over the requested permissions for specific apps. Parents can view and manage permissions on an app-by-app basis or (under "Device Details") they can view and manage the permissions requested across multiple apps.

### **Location**

Family Link gives you the ability to locate your child's device. By default this feature is turned off but you can turn it on with the location settings. When it's on you can see the

location of each signed-in device which means that, if your child is with his or her device, you can also locate your child. This only works if the device is turned on and signed in. It will not work if the device's battery is dead and location services sometimes fail for other reasons, including if the device hasn't been used for a few hours. As is always the case with GPS, it may not pinpoint the device's precise location. In addition to locating your child if he or she is with the device, this feature also allows you to easily find the child's device if it is misplaced and wipe out the data if you are worried about it getting into the wrong hands.

### **Account information**

Account information gives you basic information about your child's device and the ability to change your child's password or delete his or her account. If you change the password, be sure to give the new one to your child