03 • Device Control & Monitoring

OPENING:

Last week I told you I would look into a few apps...

Whisper – Users post whatever's on their minds by typing it into a blank field. Then the app suggests what it feels is an appropriate image to accompany the thought. The confessor can opt to go with that image or upload one of his or her own. These "whispers" can be browsed by topic, by nearby location, by popularity, and by time posted. App is filled with sexual content.

YikYak – lets users post "anything and everything" anonymously, including a lot of explicit content that's clearly not for kids. Yik Yak users post brief, Twitter-like comments and photos, which are distributed to anyone using it in the same geographic area. It works via GPS to identify where the user is each time he or she opens the app and posts messages (called "yaks") to other nearby users.

Kik – Parents need to know that Kik is an app-based alternative to standard texting as well as a social networking app for smartphones. With features like video, sketch, bot search, and friend or group code scanning, the app can be used by kids as young as 13 but should really only be used by older teens and adults since it's so easy to connect with strangers. There are no in-app ads or purchases, but the Kik Code function encourages users to use the app to connect themselves to commercial brands.

>> Isaiah 62:6-7

"On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen; all the day and all the night they shall never be silent. You who put the Lord in remembrance, take no rest, and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth."

This must be the mindset for us as digital parents.

"I have set watchmen..." That's our job. Watching over our children. Monitoring their digital life.

"We won't be silent." Constant conversations about digital life.

"Take no rest..." We can't sleep or get comfortable with technology. It changes too fast.

"...until he establishes Jerusalem..." We are trying to establish our kids as responsible digital citizens.

With this in mind, let's discuss "Device Control & Monitoring".

First off, not all devices & platforms are created equal. They have different strengths & weaknesses. They do not view parental controls the same way. There are advantages to all platforms.

You may walk into a store and think that all of these devices are the same. They have the same kind of apps, same kind of look, same kinds of screens, but they're very different.

- Apple tends to be more closed-off, has stricter app submission standards, and prefers to use parental controls on the device.
- Google trends in the opposite direction - they tend to be more open, they have less strict app submission guidelines, and prefer to let developers write apps that dig deep into parental controls for you. There are advantages on both sides.

Stay on whatever platform you and your family are 1) currently on, and 2) most familiar with. There is no wrong answer here - both platforms are on pretty equal footing.

Three Walls

As we think about device control & monitoring, think about it in terms of three walls.

Wall One: Physical device and/or internet filter as the first line of defense at your access point in your home.
- OpenDNS (free to $20) to secure your WiFi or each device
  - White List mode means only certain websites are allowed in the house.
- Circle with Disney ($78) – Creates a filter for your WiFi
- Eero Wireless Routers ($200) – Features to block inappropriate content. Also increases internet speed. Pause internet access for specific device.

Wall Two: Third party app or service on the device. We are usually talking a large cup of coffee from Starbucks a month as far as cost.

- Bark ($9 / month) - Parental Control Phone Tracker App for iPhone & Android. Going to monitor the most apps & give you the most control & features.
- Google Family Link (free) – Monitor their apps & screen time
- Screen Time in iOS 12 – Monitor their apps & screen time
- Life360 (mostly free) – Location history, device monitoring, roadside assistance, block certain apps

Wall Three: App-by-app audits. Most time consuming. Checking settings & parental controls within each app your child uses or is available to them.

Screen Time & Other Restrictions in iOS 12

Mirror iPad to screen & walk through different settings in Screen Time - iOS 12.

Set up Family Sharing in iOS.

Turn off all geo-locating features on everything but Find My iPhone, Maps & Weather.

Create your own login, pin or fingerprint ID on your child's device to access their phone, as well as set restrictions & parental controls.

Device Security

Please, please, please use good passwords. Otherwise people will do things in your name or your child's name.

How Secure Is My Password?

FamilyTreeNow.com – It's amazing what all you can find on the internet.

Have I Been Pwned: Check if your email has been compromised in a data breach

CONCLUSION:

Article about teens unhappy with their screen time.

It's up to us to help create safe, healthy boundaries for them.

When it comes to digital parenting, think in terms of guardrails.

We must be the watchmen. We must watch over and monitor our children in their digital life.

Homework:

1. Update all devices to iOS 12.
2. Set up iOS Screen Time / Restrictions or Google Family Link.
3. Go through an App-by-App Audit on your child's device.

Monitoring Sites

- Bark - Parental Control Phone Tracker App for iPhone & Android
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Screen Time – iOS 12

Turn off all geo-locating features on everything but Find My iPhone, maps & weather.

See article "Teens Aren't Happy With Their Screen Time" in evernote

#bible_class/digital_parenting