



# Wellbeing



Christmas seems a long way away and we have just survived what has been dubbed, since a successful marketing campaign for a travel company, “Blue Monday”. Blue Monday is an annual day that is often regarded as the most depressing day of the year. It typically falls on the third Monday in January and is associated with feelings of sadness, low motivation and a lack of energy. While the concept of Blue Monday has been criticized for its lack of scientific validity, and even accused of belittling mental health issues, it has become a day for promoting mental health awareness and self-care. Blue Monday 2024 is a day to acknowledge and address feelings of sadness and depression that some individuals may experience, especially during the winter months. It serves as a reminder to prioritize mental health and seek support if needed. So, while a holiday to somewhere sunny may not be possible, there are some things we can do to support our children's mental health as well as our own.

## What can we do?

Our Personal Development curriculum supports pupils to learn self care strategies and our regular wellbeing days keep the wellbeing of all our school community high on our agenda. We are also supported by the Wellbeing in Mind Team who you will often see at Parents’ evenings and information events as well as providing support to our students in whole year groups and to individuals. Here are some key reminders for us all:

- **Reach Out:** Connect with friends, family, or a mental health professional to share your feelings and seek support.
- **Practice Self-Care:** Engage in activities that promote well-being, such as exercise, meditation or hobbies you enjoy.
- **Set Realistic Goals:** Break tasks into manageable steps to reduce feelings of overwhelm.
- **Acknowledge Emotions:** It’s okay to feel sad, but try to identify and challenge negative thought patterns.
- **Limit Stressors:** Reduce exposure to stressors when possible, and prioritise self-compassion.



Follow the following links for some useful information and advice:

[Mental wellbeing tips - Every Mind Matters - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

[A whole school approach to wellbeing | Resources | YoungMinds](#)

[Home - Mind](#)



# Top Tips for SETTING UP PARENTAL CONTROLS ON NEW DEVICES

In children's eagerness to start enjoying new digital gadgets immediately, it can be easy to overlook setting up the type of parental controls that can help to protect them online. If you don't sort those out from the very start, it can be an uphill battle – technologically and psychologically – to impose such controls later. Here's our rundown of what to look for when setting up the various internet-enabled devices that might be lurking under the tree at this time of year.

## IPHONE

If your child's lucky enough to be getting their own iPhone, parental controls can help avoid issues like screen addiction and unsuitable content. Go into the settings and scroll down to 'Screen Time'. From here you can customise important settings including time limits on using the device, communication restrictions and content blockers. You can also lock your changes behind a passcode.

## ANDROID

With Android devices, Google's Family Link app is your friend. You'll need a Google account – and a separate one for your child, which you should use when first setting up the device. Then, in Family Link on your own device, select 'Add Child' and enter their account details. This lets you specify limits on daily usage, restrict certain apps, block particular content and more.

## PLAYSTATION

You can prep for a PlayStation before it's even unwrapped. At [my.account.sony.com](http://my.account.sony.com), create an account, then go to Account Management > Family Management > Add Family Member to set up your child's account, which you'll use to sign in on the console. You can restrict the age ratings of the games they can play and who they can talk to. On the PS5, you can make exceptions for any games you think are acceptable despite their high age rating.

## IPAD

iPad parental controls are identical to those on iPhones. However, if you've got a shared family iPad and want to ensure your children aren't seeing anything age-inappropriate after you hand them the device, there's a feature called Guided Access (under Settings > Accessibility > Guided Access). With this switched on, young ones can only use the app that's currently open.

## XBOX

The Xbox Family Settings app helps you manage which games your child can play (and when). You'll need to set up the console with your own account and then add a child profile. Make sure your account's password protected, so your child can't alter your choices later. You'll be walked through the functions at setup, but you can also reach them manually via Settings > Account > Family Settings.

## NINTENDO SWITCH

Download the Nintendo Switch Parental Controls app on your phone, and you'll be shown how to link it to the console. Once that's done, you can limit how long your child can play each day, decide what age ratings are permitted and more. You'll also get weekly updates on how often they've used the device. These controls are accessible through the console itself, but the app is usually easier.

## WINDOWS 11 PCS

On Windows 11, account management is key. Set up the device with your own account as the admin. Then go to Settings > Accounts > Family and Other Users and create your child's account (if you've already done this on a previous PC, just log in with those details). Microsoft Family Safety (either the app or the site) then lets you control screen time, what content children can view and more.

## CHROMEBOOKS

Chromebooks' parental controls are managed via the Family Link app. Unlike an Android device, however, you need set up the Chromebook with your own account first, then add your child's. Go to Settings > People > Add Person and input your child's Google account details (or create a new account). Your child can then log in, and you can monitor what they're up to via Family Link.

## MACS

Like iPhones, parental controls for Macs are managed via the Screen Time settings. Again, the crux here is to set yourself up as the administrator before adding any child accounts. In the settings, look for Users & Groups to create your child's account, then – while on their profile – use the screen time options to place any boundaries around apps, usage and who your child can communicate with (and vice versa).

## SMART TVS

Smart TVs typically have their own individual parental controls. One of the most popular brands is Samsung – and on their TVs, you can control the content available to your child. In the Settings menu, under 'Broadcasting', you can lock channels and restrict content by its age rating. Even this isn't foolproof, however: some apps (like YouTube) might still let children access unsuitable material.

## Meet Our Expert

Barry Collins is a technology journalist and editor with more than 20 years' experience of working for titles such as the Sunday Times, Which?, PC Pro and Computeractive. He's appeared regularly as a tech pundit on television and radio, including on BBC Newsnight, Radio 5 Live and the ITV News at Ten. He has two children and writes regularly on the subject of internet safety.



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