

## **Making our Child's Phone Safer with Spin Safe Browser**

We bought a phone for our son as he was going to be walking home alone in year 6. We weren't happy about him using the browser to have unrestricted access to the internet though (we only let him do that in a shared area of the house), so we disabled the browser on his phone as soon as he got it. He was happy to just play the apps, chat with friends and listen to music.

When he went to secondary school, he needed a browser on his phone for research. We looked in to countless parental control apps, but all had loopholes which could have allowed inappropriate content through. Finally, we came up with this solution. It's not perfect, but we are reasonably happy with it. I thought I would share it with the school community in case it was of use to anyone.

- 1/. Keep the browser the phone came with disabled (look under the Apple/Google/Android parental controls that come with the phone).
- 2/. Also prevent downloading apps without permission (in case the app being downloaded is a browser).
- 3/. Install the 'Spin' browser which has a web filter for inappropriate content, and crucially, only allows searches via Bing.com, Google.com and Yahoo.com with their safe search feature enabled - it does not allow any other search engines.

The Spin browser is free. It does have an optional accompanying parental control app called 'Boomerang' which works with spin. I have no experience of this app, and it requires a subscription.

Of course, we still need to keep a dialogue going with our son about his experiences with this new browser - we can't just assume it's all going to be OK, but at least we know we have something in place that's going to be reasonably effective.

Search online for 'Spin browser' for more information.

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