

# Android Parental Controls 101

Android is the mobile operating system from Google. It's used on smart phones, tablets and other mobile devices. Google provides an open environment different from Apple's closed environment. This means that there are more apps (applications) available to Android users because the Android developers have fewer restrictions put upon them. At this point in time, there are many apps in the Google Play app store to use as parental control software. Additionally, every phone is configured differently by the service provider and tablets vary by manufacturer. However, there still are ways to protect family members within the operating system. Below are the steps in detail describing how to do them and also why they are recommended.

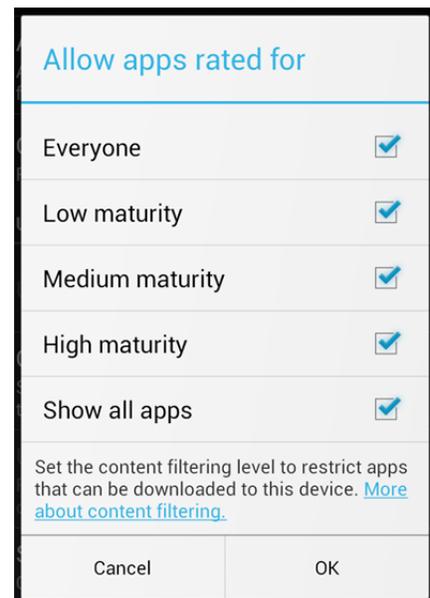
Since there are a variety of ways to setup parental controls in Android, these directions are written based upon a child that is less than 13 years of age and the parent is choosing to follow the rules of the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), a Federal Law to protect the tracking of children on the Internet under the age of 13.

## Turn on Content Filtering

*Reason why:* This is the core parental restrictions opportunity for the parent. This is where he can restrict to age appropriate apps.

*Step-by-step directions:*

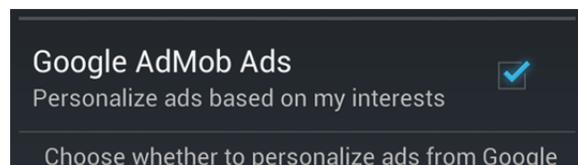
1. Select Google Play Store > Settings > Content Filtering
2. Edit the allowed content to what the parent considers appropriate for the child.



*Content Filtering in Android.  
(Photo/Jeremy Tomlinson)*

## Remove Ad Tracking

*Reasons why:* By default, Android provides advertisers with the ability to track the device and send targeted ads to the device called AdMob. If the parent does not uncheck the AdMob personalization, he is agreeing to the default terms of service from Google that he is allowing his child to be tracked by advertisers therefore disregarding the COPPA law.



*(Photo/Jeremy Tomlinson)*

©Bernadette H. Murray, 2013

Find out more at [DigitalSecurityMom.com](http://DigitalSecurityMom.com), also on Facebook and Twitter @DSecurityMom.

*"A mom's perspective to protecting your family's digital life."*

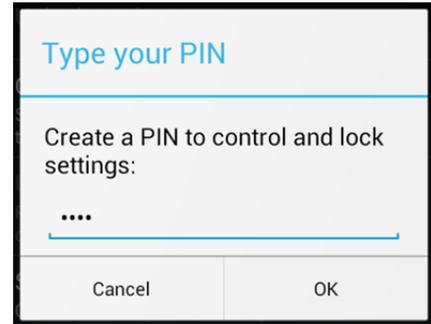
*Step-by-step directions:*

1. Select Google Play Store.
2. Select "Settings" icon (looks like a bunch of gears) and scroll to "Other".
3. Uncheck "Google AdMob Ads".

### **Lock User Controls**

*Reason why:* To prevent the child from making changes to the settings in Google Play.

1. Select Google Play Store.
2. Select "Settings" icon (looks like a bunch of gears) and scroll to "Set or Change PIN".
3. Select a passcode that will not be shared with the child.



*PIN entry in Android to lock user controls. (Photo/Jeremy Tomlinson)*

Following all the above listed steps provide some basic parental controls within Android that will give you control of most of the basic operating system.

One of the advantages of Android over iOS is the ability to use third party parental controls. If the parent would like to add even more functionality, see the resources below for some recommended apps.

---

Resources:

<http://www.internetsafetyproject.org/wiki/parental-controls-android>