

Microsoft's Parental controls for Windows 10

Introduction

Microsoft provide a good, free set of parental controls for Windows 7 and later. They have recently updated this service in Windows 10 under the simple banner of "Family", and it works as follows.

1. You create an initial adult account with Microsoft via Outlook.com (if you already have an account under Hotmail.com, Live.com or Outlook.com you can use this).
2. You then add any other adults and children to the Family section within the account – you have to know their email addresses to do this (they, too, must have Microsoft accounts).
3. Any adult within the Family account can then view the activity of any children within the account, so long as the child has logged in to a computer using their Microsoft account credentials (naturally you would enforce this on your own home computer).
4. You can change the settings of what a child can do, e.g. what web sites they can visit, what applications they can use and when they are allowed access to the computer.
5. All this is then reported via the Family section in your Microsoft account, and you can also get weekly emails with a summary of what they have been doing.

This booklet describes:

1. How to set up a Microsoft account
2. How to set up the Family section
3. How to set the level of parental controls for your child(ren)
4. How to set up accounts on your computer
5. How to switch from an old (Windows 7/8) Microsoft Family account to the new one

The instructions here relate to Windows 10. The set up for Windows 7 and 8 was somewhat different and is explained in a separate, companion booklet.

1. Set up a Microsoft email account

If you already have a Microsoft Hotmail, Live or Outlook account, you can skip this section. If you have a different email account (e.g. Gmail or Yahoo) you will need to set up a Microsoft account as well. You can have as many Microsoft email accounts as you like, and they are free to set up.

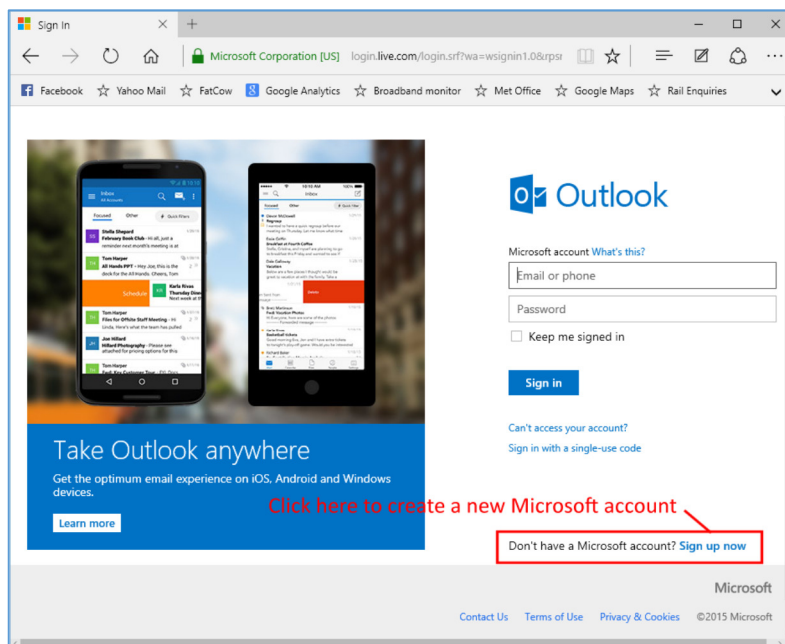
To create a new Microsoft account go to:

www.outlook.com

Then click on the link “**Sign up now**”

Fill out the form with your name, preferred email address (this will be your account name as well) and other details.

The site will tell you if the email address you want is available or not – if it is already taken you have the option to choose from some suggestions that Microsoft gives you, or you can try other names until you find one that’s available.



You also need to create a password: this is case sensitive and needs to be at least eight characters. Make sure you choose a secure password – ideally a mix of upper and lower case letters, numbers and symbols. As you will be using this for your parental controls, I suggest you choose a secure password. Here are some examples of good and bad passwords.

Good passwords	Bad passwords
Fr1endly&	password
%cAt&dog	SECRET
YT76fr5£	Pa55word

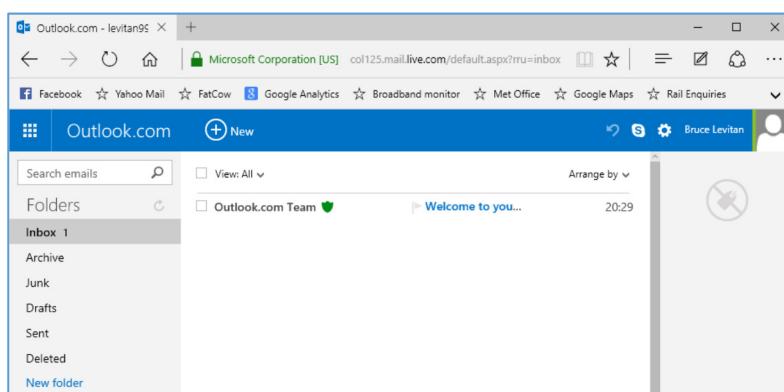
Of course, remembering passwords can be a problem so you’ll probably want to write this down. If you do, make sure you keep it in a secure location!

Once set up you will be directed to your new email inbox, where you’ll find an initial welcome email from Microsoft.

That’s it: you’re done. To visit your account, simply go to:

www.outlook.com

and log in with your email address and password.



2. Setting up parental controls in Family

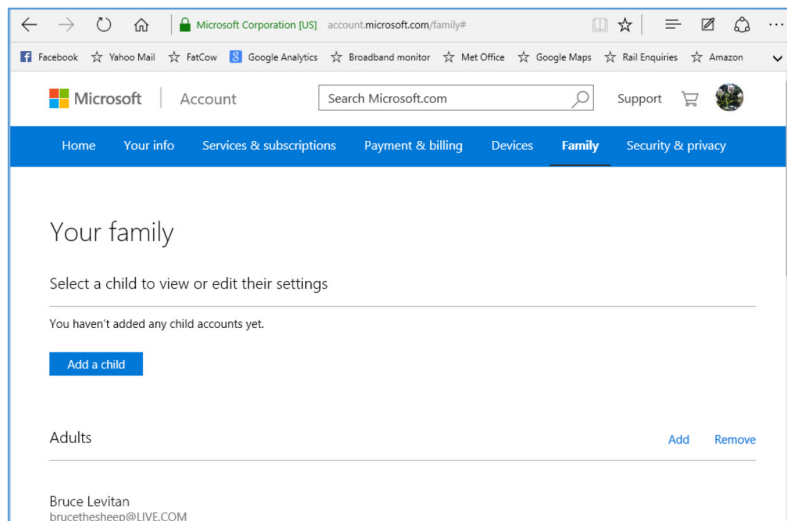
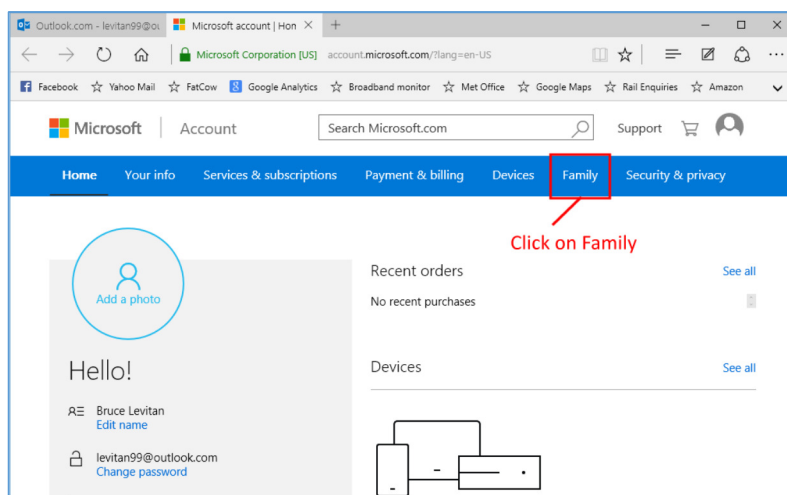
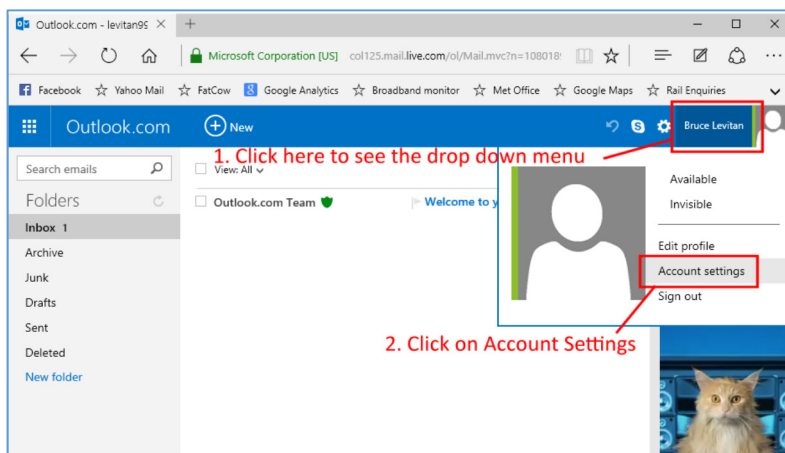
Microsoft calls their parental controls “Family”. In the new version of Family, all you need to set up a child is a Microsoft email address for them. If they don’t already have one, section 1 describes how to set up an account.

To access the Family section, from your email inbox, click on the account name at the top right of the window and choose **Account Settings** from the drop-down menu:

This may open a new tab in your browser, or simply replace the inbox page (this depends on which browser you’re using and how it’s set up).

You’ll see lots of options here – the one we’re interested in is **“Family”** which is on the menu bar across the top of the page – click on this link.

You should now see a page inviting you to add the first child. You can set it up to monitor as many children as you wish – but each child will have to have a named account on the computer for this to work – see section 4 on “Setting up named accounts on your computer” if you’re not sure how to do this.

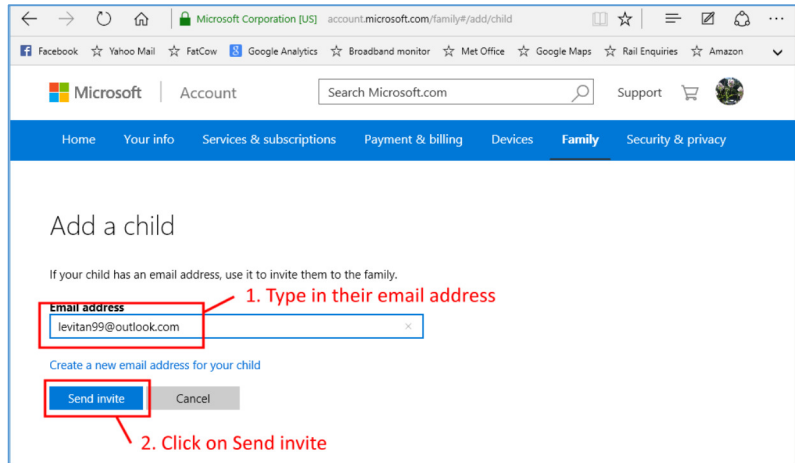


Converting from an older version of Family:

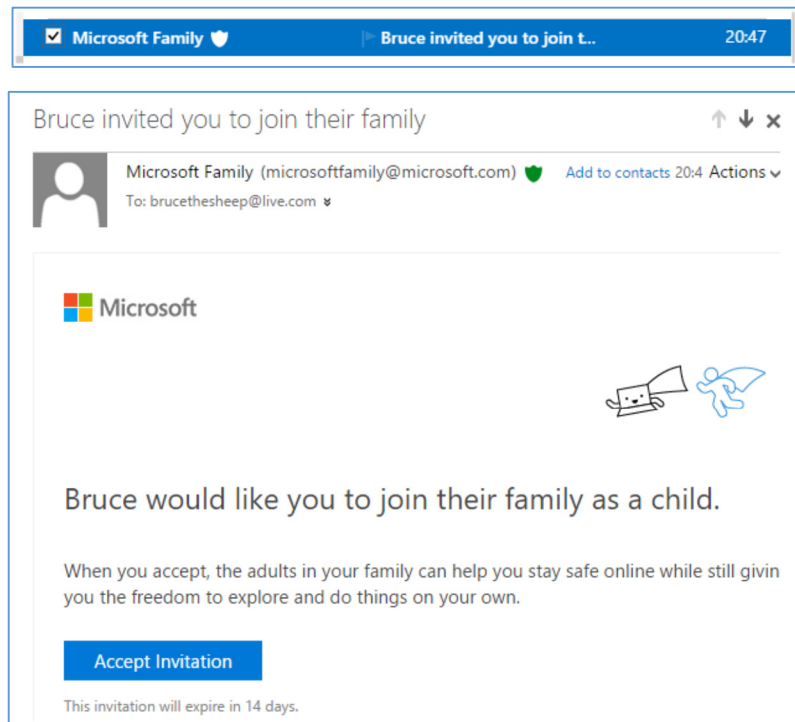
Note that if you have upgraded a computer from Windows 7 or Windows 8 to Windows 10, and you previously had one or more children registered under Microsoft Family, you’ll have to convert them to the new format. See the section 5: “Converting an older Family account”.

Click on **“Add a child”**.

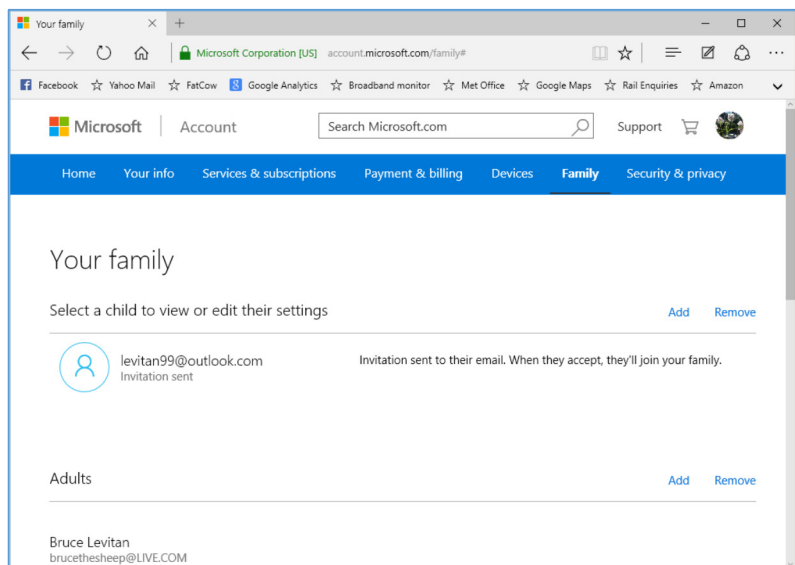
Next, simply type in their email address and click **“Send Invite”**.



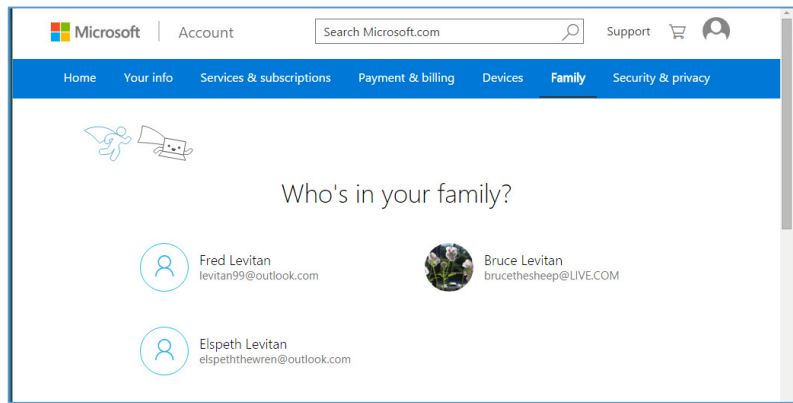
They will receive an email which they'll have to accept so you should make sure they do this! Opposite is an example of the email they'll receive.



You'll then see them listed in the child section with a note **“Invitation sent”**

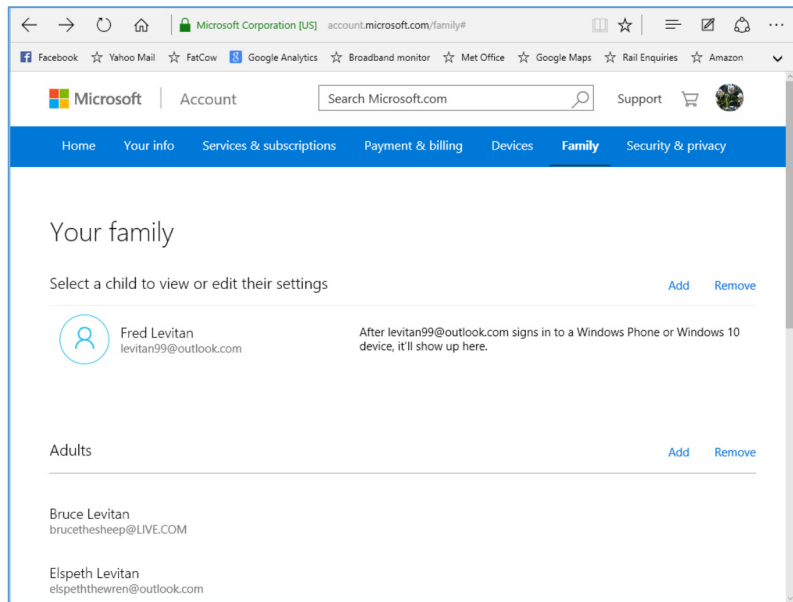


When they accept their invite they'll see a web page like the one opposite.



And in your (parent's) account you'll see that the status has been updated as shown here:

You are now ready to customise the settings for your child's access (see section 3).



3. Setting a child's access controls

To set a child's access controls, log in to your Microsoft account, and choose the Family section as described above in section 2 "Setting up Parental Controls".

Click on the name of the child you want to adjust the settings for and if they have just been newly added you'll see a page like the one below that says **Activity reporting** is off.

The first thing to do is move the slider control so "**Activity reporting**" is on. You'll now see a while range of settings, as follows:

InPrivate browsing

InPrivate browsing is **blocked**

InPrivate browsing is a setting you can put in your browser

that stops the computer recording what web sites you visit. Obviously you don't want that to happen so this turns that facility off and the child won't be able to use it from their Windows 10 "Edge" browser (or Internet Explorer in earlier versions of Windows). This doesn't work for other browsers (like Chrome and FireFox) so you should ensure that these are not available to the child.

Email weekly reports to me

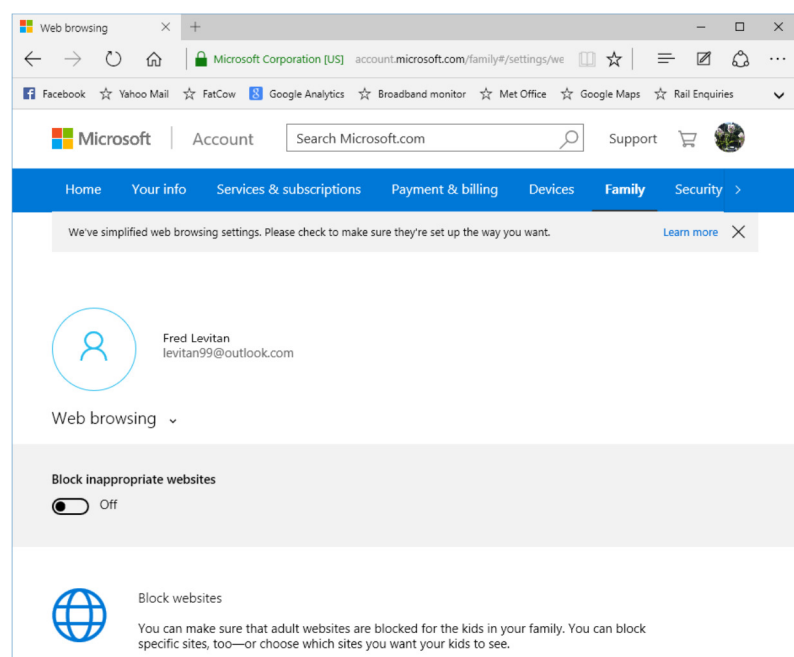
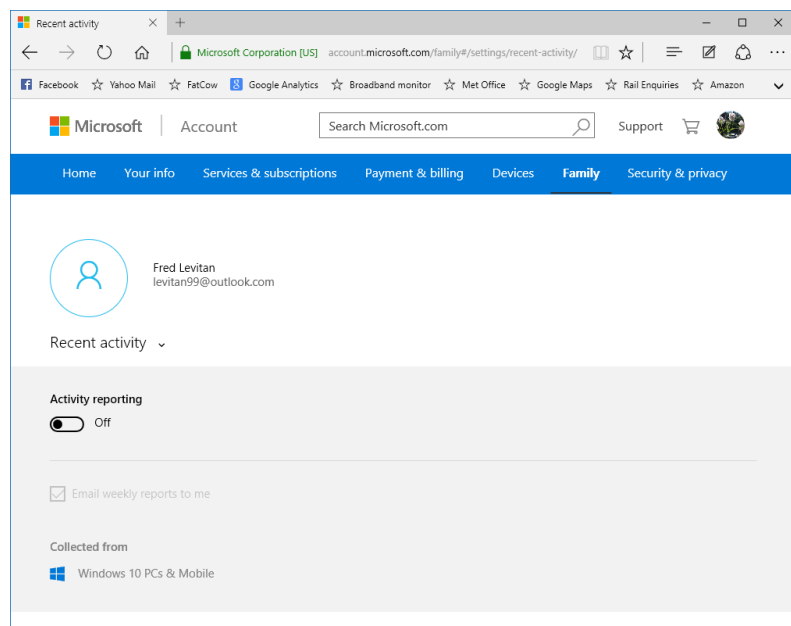
This option will be ticked by default, but you can untick it if you prefer. You'll still be able to log in to see their activity, you just won't get email summaries of it. My advice is to leave it on to see what the emails are like, and then turn it off later if you don't find them useful.

Recent Activity

This will show all the activity of the child under each of the section headings. For example, any web sites they access, or applications or games they use will be displayed here. If you see anything you consider inappropriate, you can also block future access to that.

Web browsing

This is where the list of web sites they visit will appear. You can block specific web sites by clicking on the link "**Web browsing**" and then changing



the slider “**Block inappropriate websites**” to On (by default it is turned off so they can visit any web site).

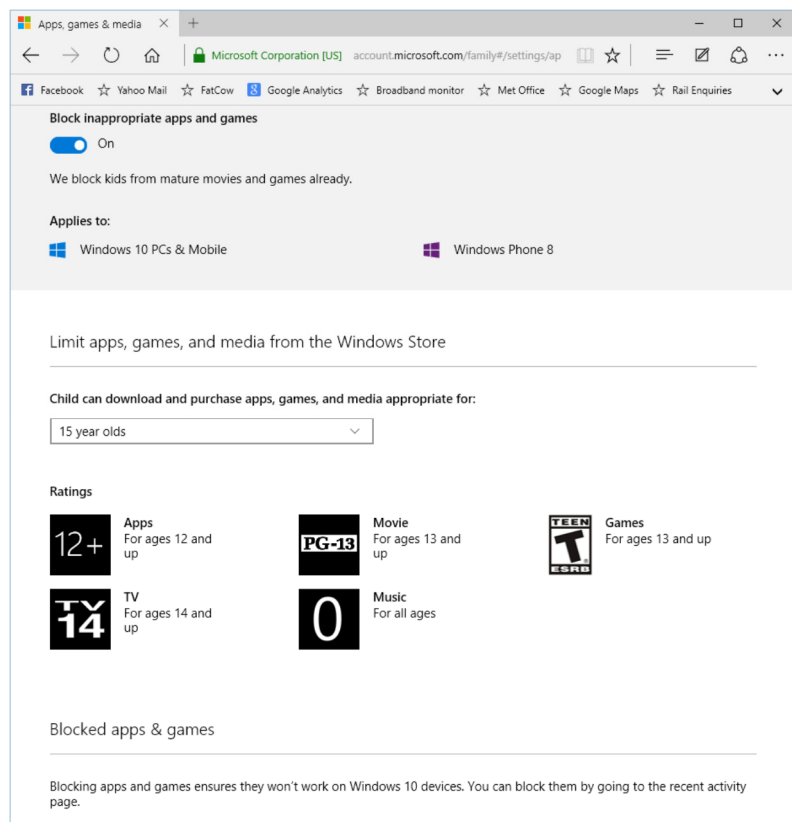
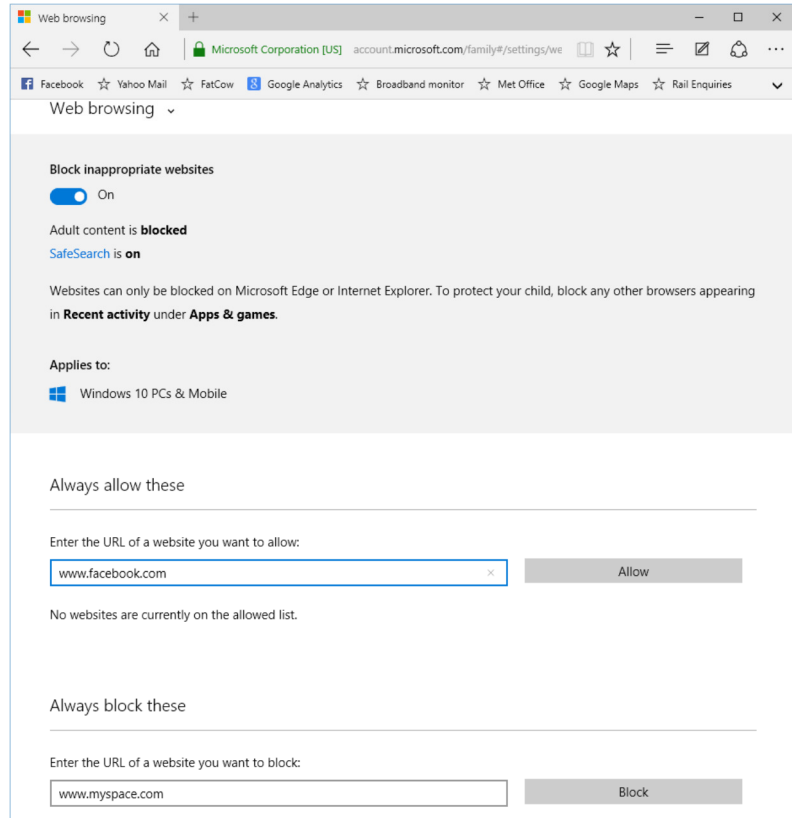
Then simply add the websites you want to block as shown in the screenshot opposite. You can also allow websites you specifically want to allow.

Apps & games

This is where you can set up what applications and games that are on your computer will be available to the child (for example if you have multiple web browsers, it might be best to only allow them to use Internet Explorer (or Edge in Windows 10) for reasons described above. To activate this, click “**Apps, games & media**” and then on the slider “**Block inappropriate apps and games**”.

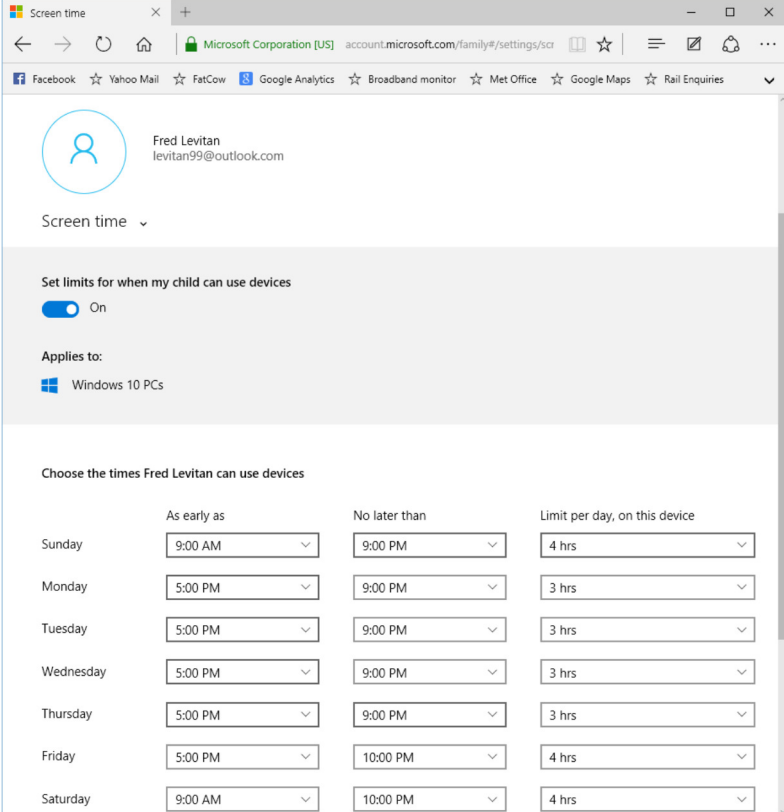
Then choose the age of your child: Microsoft will then automatically block any applications they try and use or download with an age rating above that.

If they try to use an application that is above their age limit they’ll receive a message and will have the ability to ask for access: You’ll then receive an email from them and you can grant or deny access as you see fit.



Screen time

This is where you can control the days and times when your child can access the computer. Change the slider control for **“Set limits for when my child can use devices”** to On and then set up the regime you want for each day of the week – you can set both start and end times and maximum amount of time allowed. For example in the screenshot opposite they can use the computer on a Sunday any time between 9:00 am and 9:00 pm up to a maximum of 4 hours. This means they can log in and out several times during the day, but once their 4 hour limit is reached they’ll be cut off even if it’s before curfew time.



	As early as	No later than	Limit per day, on this device
Sunday	9:00 AM	9:00 PM	4 hrs
Monday	5:00 PM	9:00 PM	3 hrs
Tuesday	5:00 PM	9:00 PM	3 hrs
Wednesday	5:00 PM	9:00 PM	3 hrs
Thursday	5:00 PM	9:00 PM	3 hrs
Friday	5:00 PM	10:00 PM	4 hrs
Saturday	9:00 AM	10:00 PM	4 hrs

Purchase & spending

This is an area where you can load money into an account that your child can then use to purchase applications, etc. from the Microsoft Windows and xBox stores (it won’t allow them to buy applications over their age rating). Visit this section and click on **“Add money to their account”** and then follow the instructions. You will also be able to see what the purchased.

Find your child

This allows you to track any Windows 10 mobile device that your child uses (e.g. a Windows smartphone). It won’t work with Android or Apple systems or earlier version of Windows, unfortunately. To use it you will need to have added their device and then you can turn this on.

4. Setting up named accounts on your computer

To be able to track your child's activity, they will have to have a named account on your computer.

To do this, you need to click on the Start Menu button at the bottom left of the screen and choose Settings. (NB this may vary slightly for Windows 7 and 8).

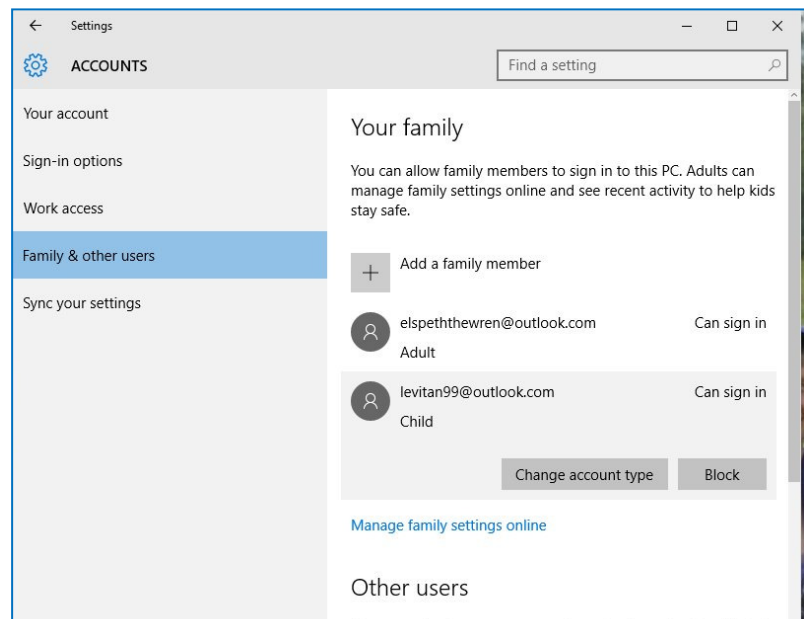
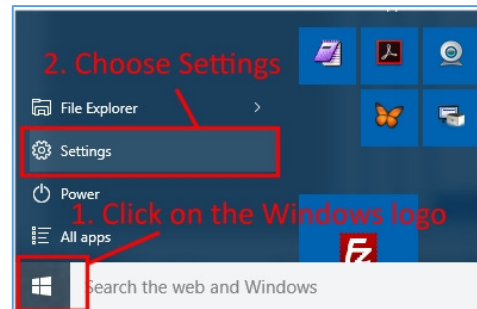
Then choose **Accounts**, and then **Family & other users** (see below).

You'll see two options: to add a family member or to add other users.

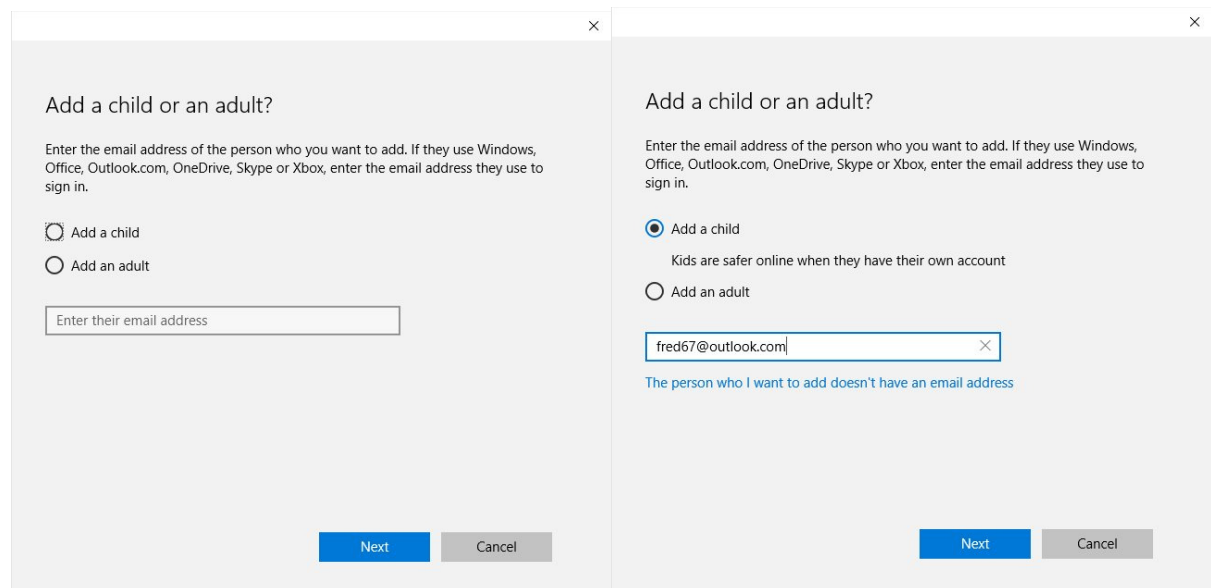
Note that if they already have a Microsoft account and you have added them as explained in the previous section, they will appear on this screen, so all you have to do is select their name and choose **Allow**, and then make sure their account type is **Child** (see example on the right).

Otherwise Click **"Add a family member"**.

Next click on **Add a child** and type in their email address, and click **Next**.



You'll then get a confirmation screen to confirm that you want to add this person.



Once you have completed this, their name will appear in the **Your Family** section as shown in the screenshot above.

Now, when the computer is switched on, there will be the option to sign in on any of the named accounts. When your child signs in under their account, their activity will be logged in the Microsoft Family area, and only adults will have access to this (see section 3).

5. Switching from an old (Windows 7/8) Microsoft Family account to the new one

If you have previously set up your child using the Windows 7 or 8 Family account, you'll need to change their settings to work in Windows 10.

Get your child to sign in to the PC they use.

If they already have a Microsoft account which they use to sign in with, open **Settings**, then select **Accounts**. Then select **Your account** (see section 4).

If your child doesn't currently sign in with a Microsoft account, select **Sign in with a Microsoft account** instead and enter their email address.

If an email address is already associated with their account, make a note of it.

Now login to your Microsoft Family account at outlook.com and go to **Select a child to view or edit their settings**, then select **Add** as described in section 2. Now enter the email address that your child uses to sign in to Windows 10, then select **Send invite**.