

## Dear Parent,

We know that there are plenty of parents who hesitate to let their children use their computers at home because they're not completely sure how to protect their data from their children. We hope this letter helps you, but first you need to know a couple of things about your computer so that you can choose the right steps to follow.

- 🔗 Most families have PCs but some have Macs. Make sure you know which kind of computer you have.
- 🔗 Every personal computer, no matter what kind it is, has an operating system. This is the main program on the computer that lets you use your printer, keyboard, mouse, etc., as well as any other programs you've installed on the computer, including games. Though operating systems do the same kinds of jobs, they don't always do them the same way, so it's important to know which one you've got on your computer.
  - ✓ If you have a PC, you probably have Windows. You may already know if you've got Vista, XP, 2000, or an older version of Windows that isn't supported any more. If you don't know which kind you have, it's not hard to find out:
    1. Left-click on the Start button to open the Start Menu.
    2. Right-click on My Computer or Computer, and then left-click on Properties.
    3. When the Properties window opens, it should tell you what kind of system or Windows edition you're using. If you have XP, take note of whether you have XP Home, or XP Professional. The directions below are for XP or Vista since they're the most current.
  - ✓ If you have a Mac, we're going to assume you're using OS X.

No matter what kind of computer you have at home, and no matter which operating system is on it, you'll need to do these things:

- 🔗 create a separate account for your child
- 🔗 make sure that your own login account is password protected,
- 🔗 make sure that you've turned off sharing and protected your files and folders from other users such as your child, and
- 🔗 double-check to make sure that your account gives you total control over the computer.

The best passwords have the following characteristics: at least 8 characters long, a mixture of upper and lower case letters, at least one number, and (if possible) a punctuation character like a period or a dash. The punctuation characters you are allowed to use may vary. Just make sure you can remember it!

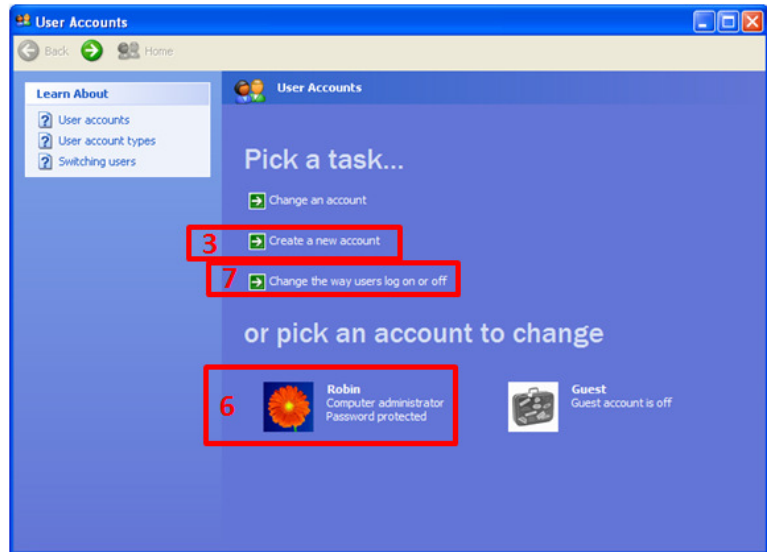
Below you'll find the steps you need to follow for Windows XP, Windows Vista, and Mac. In every case, we'll assume that you will be creating an account for your child and naming it your child's name. You may choose to let your child pick his or her login picture for the welcome screen. No password is required, but if you want to use one, we suggest that you use your child's name, especially if your child is a pre-reader. Additionally, if you use a password, carefully help your child understand that he or she never tells anyone that password. He or she should always politely respond, "I'm sorry – I can't tell you my password." You might occasionally try asking, just like you practice your secret safety code word, if you use one.

Once you've added an account just for your child, you may find it necessary to uninstall and reinstall a game in the event that you first installed it without making it available to all users, but the minor inconvenience of that is worth the peace of mind of knowing that your Quicken files, or other personal files, are all safe from eager little fingers!

## If you have Windows XP

If you have a PC running Windows XP, follow these steps:

1. Left-click on the Start Button or press your Windows key to open the Start Menu.
2. Open the Control Panel to get to the User Accounts.
3. Choose to Create a new account.
4. Use your child's name as the username, and set the account type to limited.



5. Return to the User Accounts window.

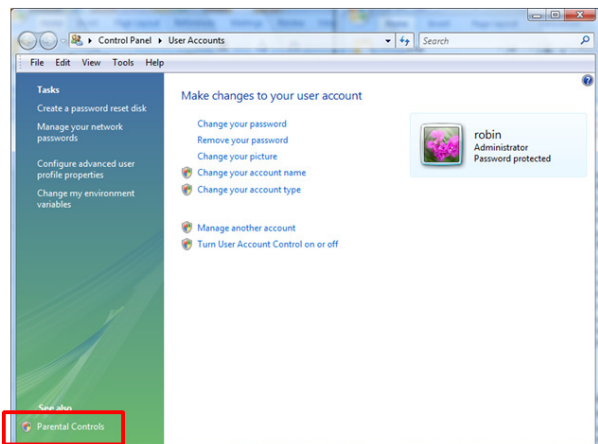
6. Confirm that you've got a password and that you're a computer administrator. If you don't have a password, click on your icon to change your password, and then return to the User Accounts window.

7. Finally, in the User Accounts window, you'll want to click on the Change the way users log on or off to make sure users log in using the Welcome screen so that your child can see his or her name.

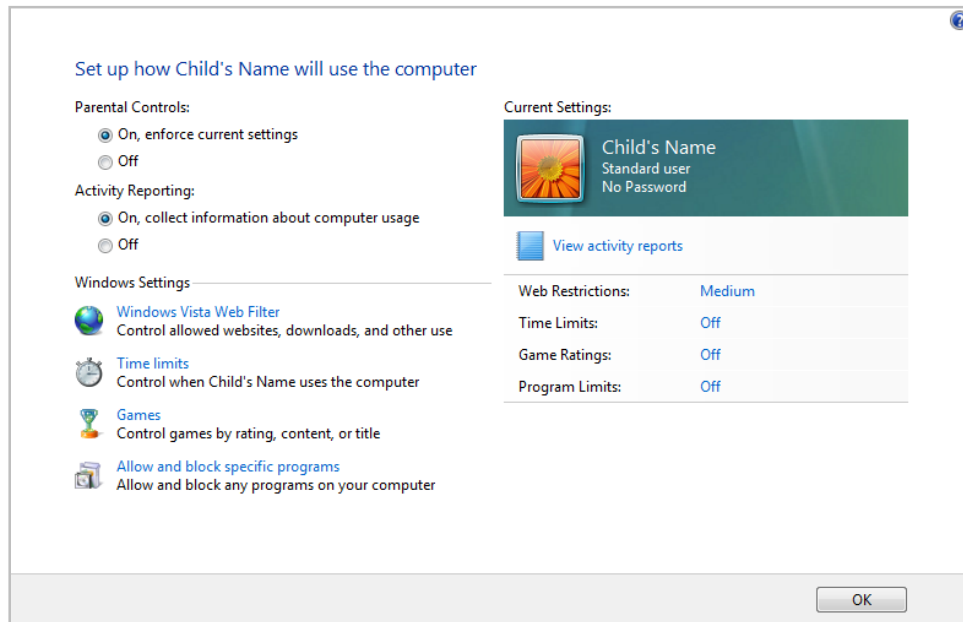
## If you have Windows Vista

If you have a PC running Windows Vista, follow these steps:

1. Left-click on the Start Button or press your Windows key to open the Start Menu.
2. Open the Control Panel to get to the User Accounts.
3. Look for the Parental Controls on the left side of the User Accounts window. The Parent Controls window will open.
4. Use the option at the bottom of the list that allows you to create a new user account with Parental Controls, and don't forget to UNCHECK the box forcing your child to provide a password at the next logon.



The Parental controls will be usable once you click to turn them on and to enforce current settings:



## If you have a Macintosh

If you have a Mac with OS X, follow these steps:

1. Log into your computer as an administrator
2. Open the System Preferences from the Dock, and choose Accounts.
3. If some settings are dimmed in the Accounts window, click the lock icon and type an administrator name and password.
4. Click the plus sign (+) to add a new account, and type your child's name. If you don't want to use the short name generated automatically, type a new short name (do it now because you won't be able to change it later).
5. Use Parental Controls to restrict what your child can do with the computer.

In general, Macs don't encourage the use of blank administrative passwords, so the odds are that you already have one. If you don't, or if you want to change it because you don't think it's strong enough, open the Apple menu, and choose System Preferences. When the System Preferences window opens, select Accounts from the View menu. You may have to unlock again, like described above. Select your username to change your password. The specific steps depend on the version of OS X you have, and you'll find further detailed directions for changing your password on this page:

<http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=106156>.

## You don't have to share everything...

Just because you've created an account for your child and made sure you have a password on your own login, doesn't mean we're finished protecting your important data from your precocious child. There are different steps to follow on a PC depending on the version of Windows you're using.

By default, simple file sharing is turned on in Windows XP Home Edition, and also in some cases for Windows XP Professional (it's not turned on by default on Vista). That means that usually your files and folders can be accessed by anyone else on the computer.

## If you have Windows XP Home Edition

While you cannot truly disable simple file sharing in Windows XP Home Edition, you can make changes that offer greater protection to your files. XP Home Edition wasn't designed to include the same kinds of security measures that are part of XP Professional, so this task is a little convoluted:

1. First, you'll have to reboot your computer into Safe Mode. (Safe Mode is a special start-up mode that only allows the required part of Windows to start. Many of your device drivers won't be loaded, so you probably can't print or use other peripherals. Your screen may not look the same - it might be just black and white. And there are other differences. This is a mode that allows special diagnostics to be run, and is most often used if the system isn't working properly. If you use Start Mode to troubleshoot your computer, you'll restart into normal everyday mode when you're finished). To get to Safe Mode, restart your computer, and when you see the Windows XP logo on the screen, quickly press the F8 key. You will log in as administrator, and you can safely ignore the message telling you that you're running in Safe Mode.
2. Find your My Documents folder, right-click on it to open the Properties, and you will be able to change permissions (who can do what) there. If you want to change the permissions for a folder AND all the subfolders inside it, you're going to have to click on the Advanced button. Check the box called "Replace permission entries on all child objects with entries shown here that apply to child objects" and click OK. A warning message will be displayed that tells you "This will remove explicitly defined permissions on all child objects and enable propagation of inheritable permissions to those child objects. Only inheritable permissions propagated from webapps will take effect. Do you want to continue?", and you can safely click "Yes" here.

## If you have Windows XP Professional or Windows Vista

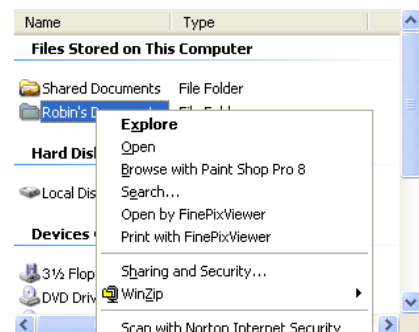
These directions apply to computers running Windows XP Professional or Windows Vista.

First, make your folders private so that they can't be shared with everyone. To do this, follow these steps:

1. Click on the Start Button, open your Control Panel from the Start Menu, then click Tools, and then click Folder Options.
2. Go to the View tab in the dialog box, and scroll to the bottom of the Advanced Settings list.
3. Clear the check box for "Use simple file sharing (Recommended)"

In some cases, you can also set your own My Documents folder as private, which means that no one else (that means no one else) may read or write to the folder or the files in it, including any subfolders that you've created. To do this, double-click on the My Computer on your desktop. Right-click on your Documents folder, and select the Sharing and Security... command.

When the My Documents Properties window opens, click in the "Do not share this folder" radio button (like the picture below right), and click OK. This gives you (the owner) complete control of this folder, and your eager child should be unable to see your files or accidentally do anything to them.



## When you're finished with that

Once you have set up your child's account, made sure that your account is a password-protected administrative account, and secured your files, remember that you will install new games for your child from your own account, and set it so that all users can run them.