



2018

Safe on Social Guide to

Roblox



safeonsocial.com



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Your Guide to being Safe on Social

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Roblox

Or where your children went after Minecraft.

This is another beautifully creative app, made with clever intent that has a few issues parents need to keep an eye on. It's also an app that will require from a parent or teacher, a bit more education about the controls and options necessary to make this game a safe experience.

It is also important to note that in March 2017, the developers launched a significant upgrade to their moderations, filters and controls to make Roblox a much safer experience.

About Roblox

One of the older platforms, Roblox was launched in 2006.

Described by the founder David Baszucki, as an "immersive 3D sandbox", the initial premise was as a space that would drive itself through the creativity of the players, by constructing games and worlds attractive to other users.

As a platform for content both designed and run by the users, it has served as a launching pad for some of the most highly paid game creators currently around, and due to some clever structuring Baszucki has managed to hang onto the skills of some of the people who create on the platform and made Roblox generate an income for them.

A few facts:

- There are 62 million monthly players currently on Roblox
- Users have spent over 4.9 billion hours playing on the games others have designed
- There are over 15 million Roblox games available to play
- The platform is completely cloud based, allowing a wide audience to play together
- The platform is free to download
- The age rating is cited as 12+

How does it work

The official description from the creators is that this is a platform defined for user generated content.

When an account is started a user is provided with a piece of virtual real estate. They are also supplied with a toolbox to get on with building their world. An account holder builds their own world/or games, under the guise of their avatar- who they also dress and design. The creativity, and amount of stuff a user makes (and its popularity) earns them Robux - an in game currency, which can then be spent.

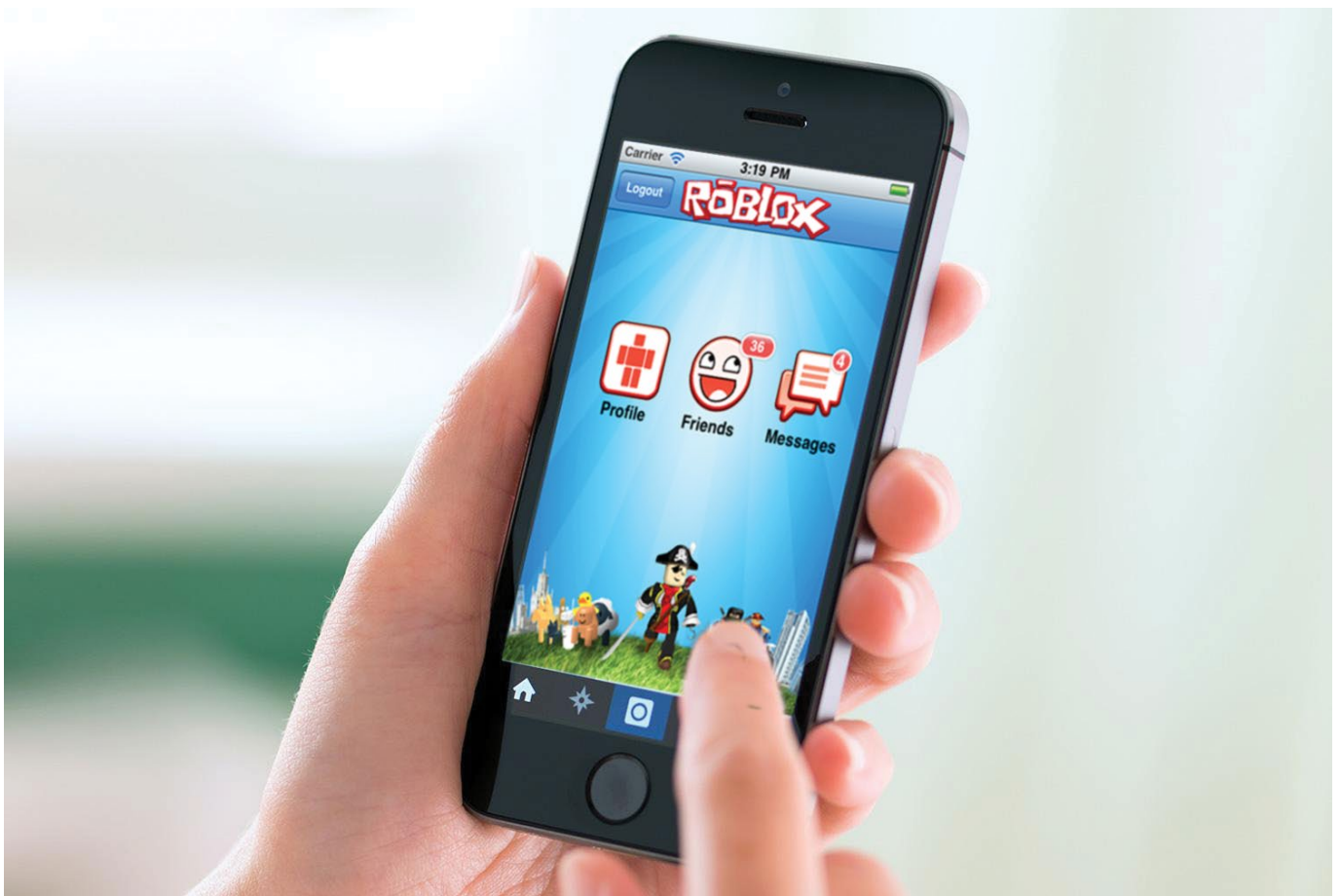
There are no parameters around what the users can build, Roblox is all about imagination, world and game design.

User will meet other players, as they move from world to world. Parental controls can limit these interactions, and moderate the content of the chat between users.

The usual online creeps can lurk here but a child playing an online gaming platform must have a certain level of knowledge about internet safety.

An understanding that they must only accept friend requests from people they know from real life (or check with Mum or Dad for the younger folk- before accepting any friend requests) is vital. As is an explanation to your child that stranger danger extends to the internet.

The best way to ensure both you and your child are comfortable with Roblox, is to actually sit down and play with your child in front of the screen. It is highly likely that a child will rapidly exceed your abilities to play but any time spent will give you information you need about how to navigate the site, and how your child behaves online.



When signing up

(Things to do list)

- don't use your real name, or your child's real name to sign up.
- make sure your password is at least 8 digits long with upper and lower-case letters, plus a numeric included
- use the actual date of birth to engage the relevant restrictions, particularly if your child is under 12.
- provide your parent email address
- use the parental pin option
- Enable account restrictions
- use the two step verifications system
- do not include links to other social media accounts
- choose your parental controls
- work with your child, and explain your actions and the reasons

Robux - and the game economy

If it fits the games family friendly ethos, creators can create, and charge players for in game items they have designed. Robux currency is earned, which can be spent on further items made by others in the community.

Examples of items that can be purchased include avatar bits and pieces, clothing, additional tools, skills to enhance game play and materials for construction.

In-game purchases are available

Real money can be spent to buy additional Robux.

Joining the Builders Club at sign up allows a player to make their own stuff, and sell these to others. This is sensible option, providing a player with the ability to earn Robux and sustain their game play in a self-sufficient manner.

Warning

With the option of in game purchases, comes the peer pressure to buy the latest "stuff" for both avatars and to decorate and improve their worlds. Costs add up fast within the app, and parents need to be aware of this.

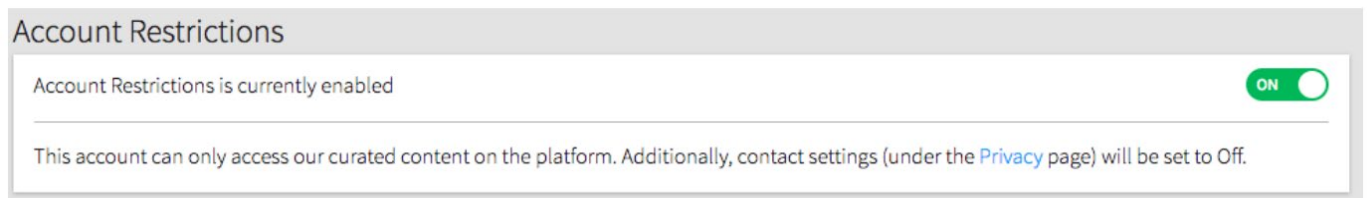
Don't link your credit card to your child's Roblox account, and teach your child to ask if they wish to shop online

Problems and solutions

Uploaded content

Quite simply, not all the content is kid friendly. Violence, inappropriate language, weapons are all present within the variety of games and worlds designed. The new features Roblox has initiated can tailor your younger users experience accordingly.

Once account restrictions are set, only content determined to be safe can be accessed

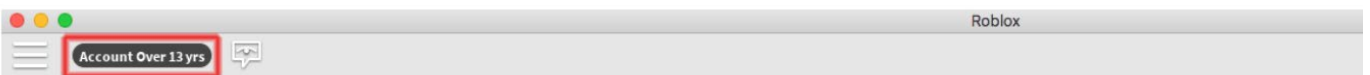


You are also able to view at a glance the age restricting applicable to what your child is playing at any time.

On the toolbar



On a desktop



On a mobile device



On a console



It also possible to report a game that breaches Roblox Community guidelines or is inappropriately placed when viewing the content and considering what the age restrictions should be.

Naked avatars

From June of 2017, Roblox deployed a new default mode. This recognizes when an avatar is dressed inappropriately (or is stark naked) and applies a default set of clothes.

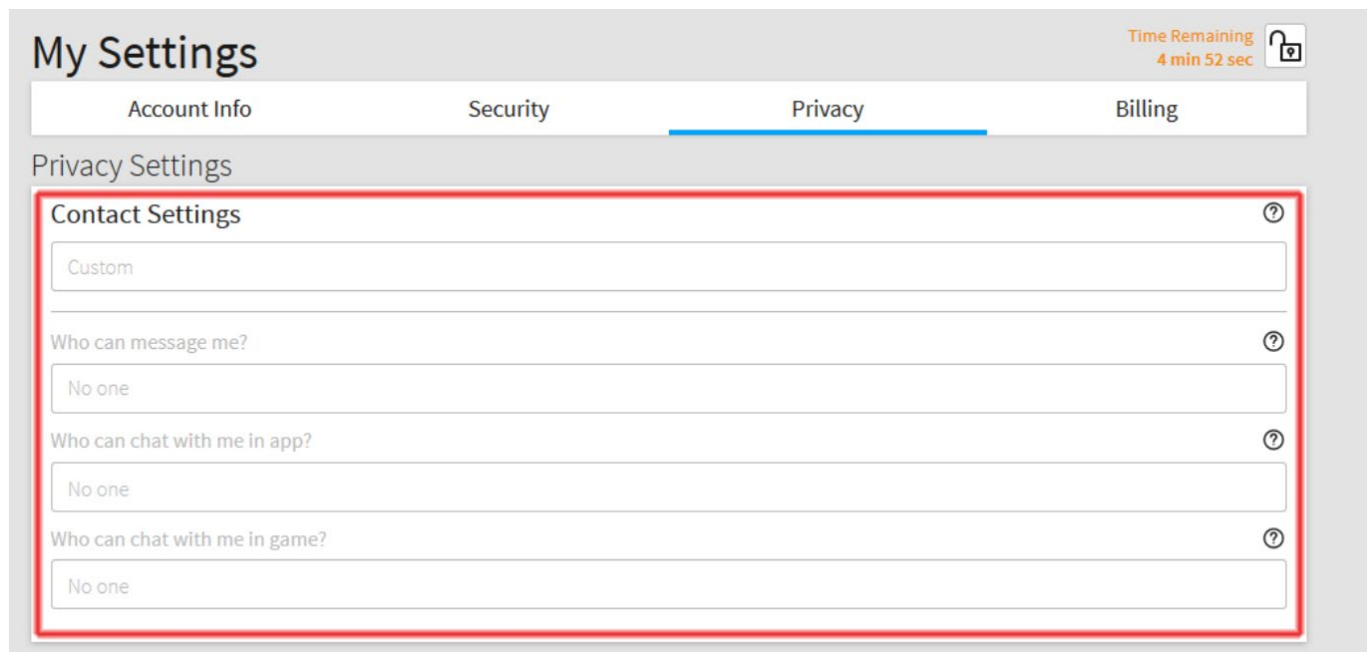
The attire of avatars or lack of, had been a consistent problem. Avatars both topless and without pants provided a steady source of complaints from parents.

Chat feature

All the conversations on Roblox are filtered to remove obscene language. This feature has its vocabulary intensively expanded earlier this year by the creators, eliminating a large number of words.

Chat can be further restricted through the account settings, or disabled if necessary, another new control for parents.

When a player signs up for the account using their correct birthdate, restrictions are automatically put into place when indicated.



The image shows a screenshot of the Roblox 'My Settings' page, specifically the 'Privacy' tab. The page has a header with 'My Settings' on the left and 'Time Remaining 4 min 52 sec' with a lock icon on the right. Below the header are four tabs: 'Account Info', 'Security', 'Privacy' (which is selected and highlighted with a blue underline), and 'Billing'. Under the 'Privacy' tab, the 'Privacy Settings' section is visible. A red rectangular box highlights the 'Contact Settings' section, which includes four settings, each with a question mark icon to its right:

- Contact Settings**: Custom
- Who can message me?**: No one
- Who can chat with me in app?**: No one
- Who can chat with me in game?**: No one

Chat in particular for users 12 and under is heavily filtered for inappropriate content in the language used, and Roblox for all ages levels has the added bonus of also filtering all chat to prevent personal details being shared online.

An under 13 may select from either Friends or No one as selection of who they are able to communicate with, for older user the options are more nuanced through the settings tabs. For parents who wish to eliminate all chances their child maybe approached by a stranger in Chat, turning off all chat within the game will prevent contact being made.

Should a child mistakenly accept a stranger's friend request, the unfriend option can be utilized, by accessing the profile of the stranger, and selecting unfriend.

Cyberbullying and Harassment

Cyberbullies exist on all social media apps and platforms. Consistent behavioral recommendations given to children about how to cope in this circumstance are helpful.

Working with your child as they start to use social media, and in this instance, reviewing the interactions your child's account has will help protect them and minimize their exposure to unpleasant online behaviours.

Tell your parent or a teacher (a friend is good when the player is older)

Screen shot the comments and save to a file

Block the bully from communicating by chat

Report the player for abuse

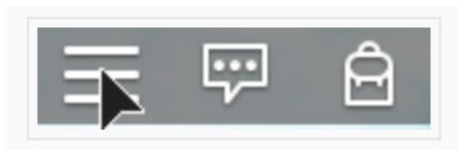
Go to en.help.roblox.com

Reporting abuse

When the Roblox rules are being broken, it is possible to both block and report the user in question.

Here's how:

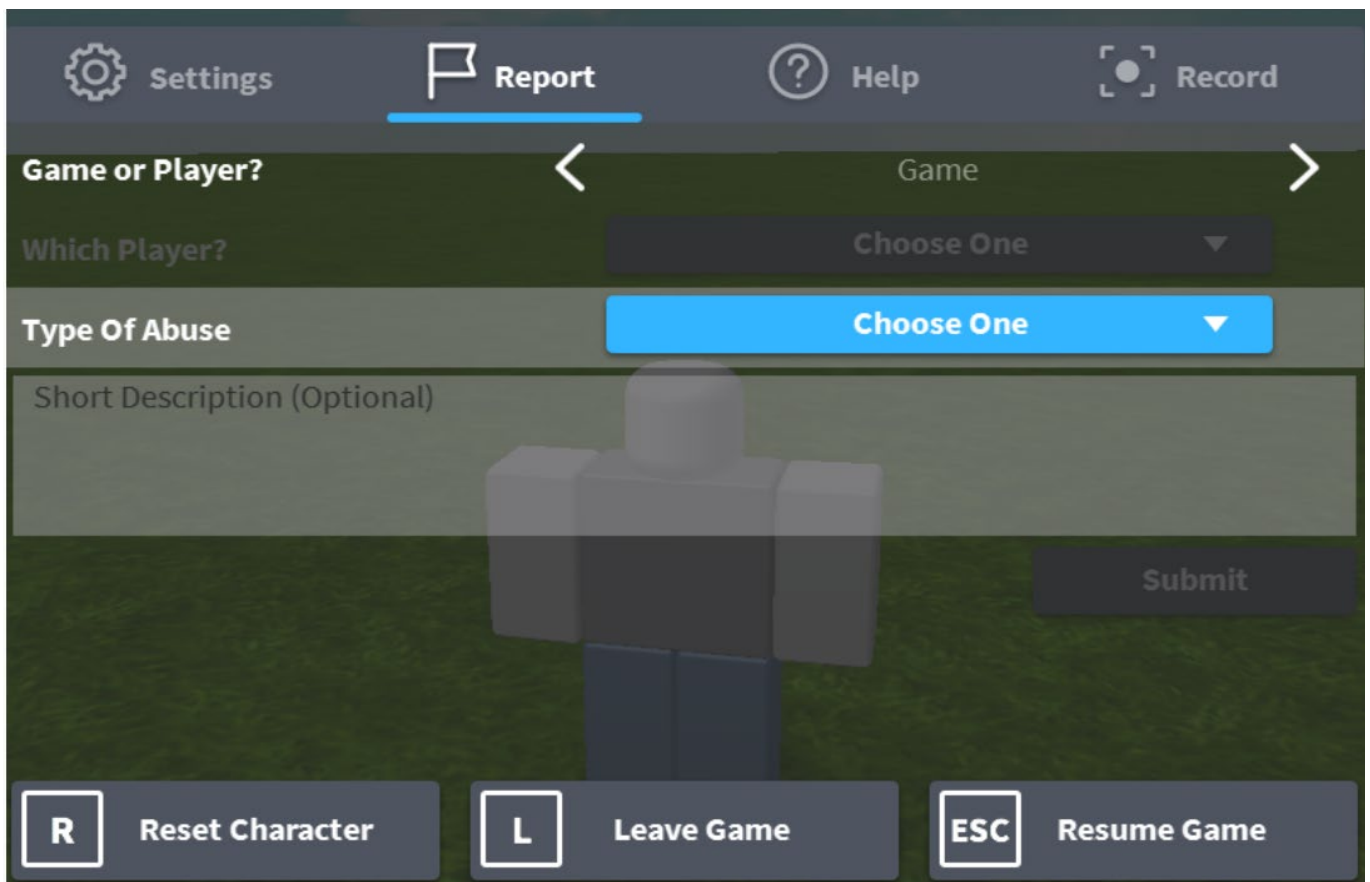
1. Click the Menu button. This is found in the top left of the screen, and looks like this.



2. Click "Report" in the settings menu



3. Choose the Player option, and choose the relevant type of abuse. There is also an option to write further details in the description box.



4. Tap Submit to send the report.



In - Game Blocking

To stop cyberbullies and unwanted commentators the best thing to do is shut them up completely by individually blocking them.

Roblox suggests that in addition to reporting to the moderators, player block individuals in – game by:

1. Locate the particular player on the leaderboards of the game



(if the leaderboard is not appearing, it is likely that it is closed. It can be reopened by tapping on the account holders user name.)

2. Tap or click on the offending players name and a menu will open. From this menu you are able to Unblock, block , and report.
3. Choose Block user.
4. A circle with a line drawn through it will be shown instead of the players avatar.

Roblox Safety and Privacy

(or how to lock in the settings)

As said previously Roblox has overhauled its safety and security settings.

A Roblox account should be opened with a parent present and engaged in the actions.

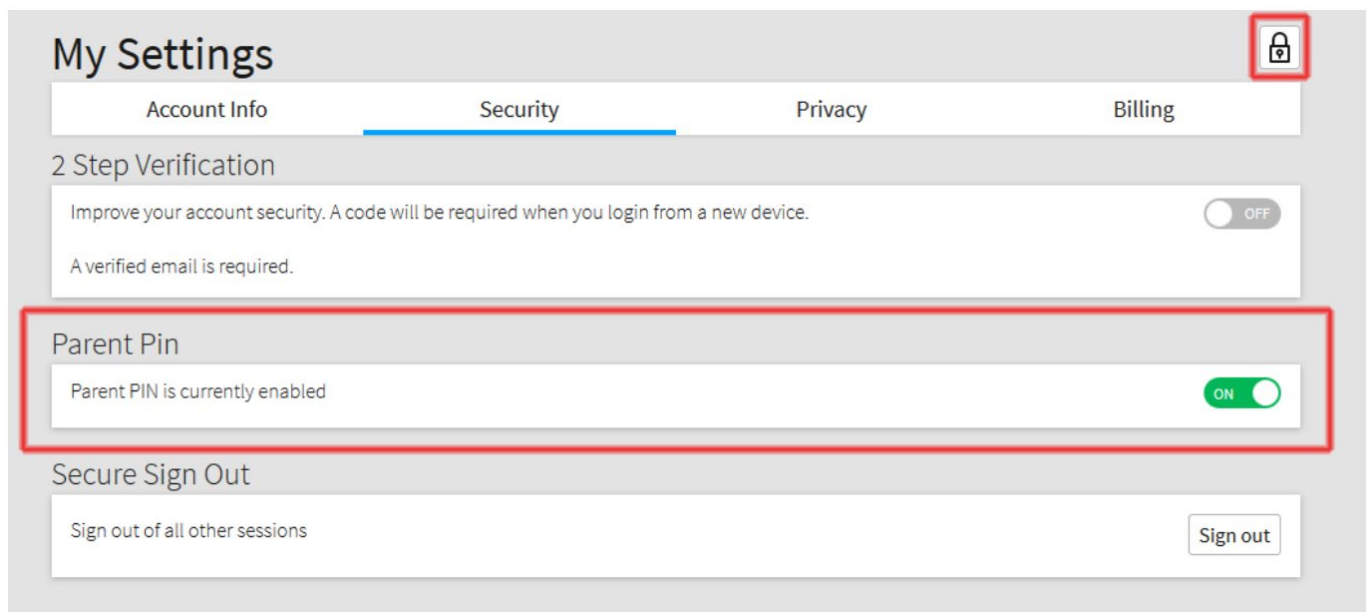
It is possible to set a variety of controls at when opening an account and restrict these from alteration by your child.

Two step identification

When a Roblox account is logged into from a different device, an email containing a security number will be sent to the verified email address on the account.

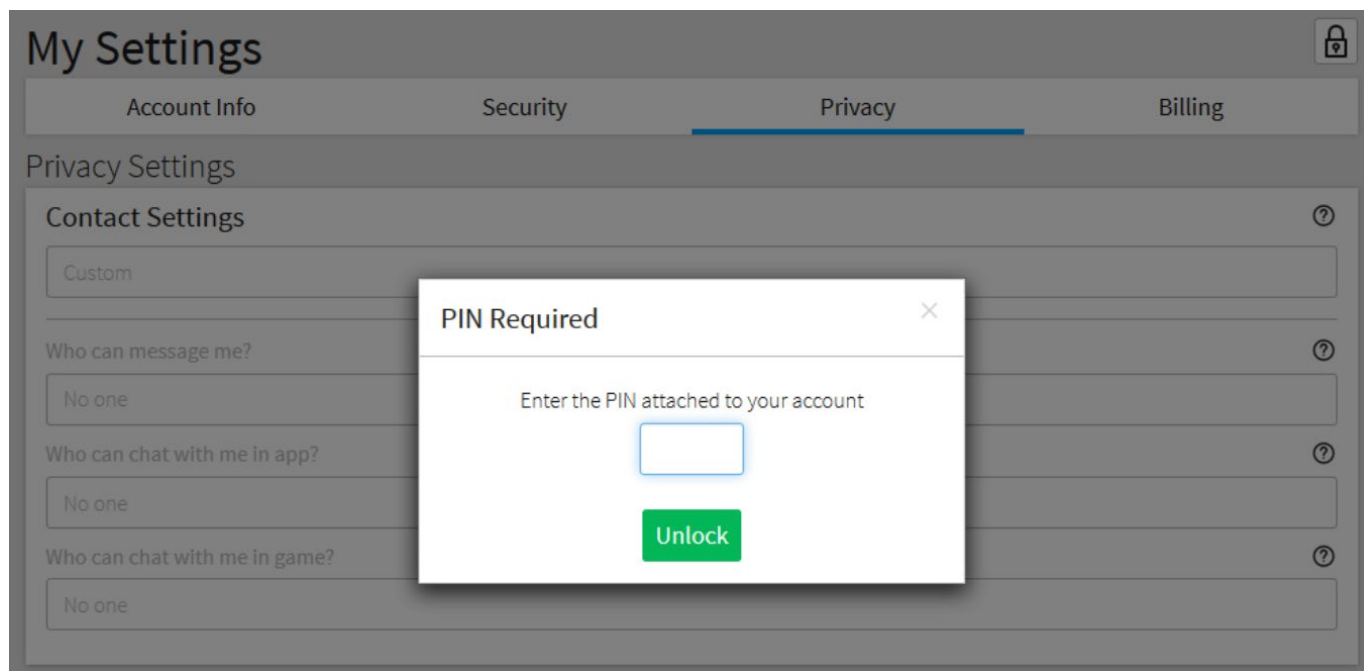
This code will be necessary to open the account, in addition to the user's password.

Parent Pin - once your child's account is set up, a four-digit pin number can be used to block your child from altering their account settings without your authority.



The screenshot displays the 'My Settings' page with the 'Security' tab selected. A red box highlights a lock icon in the top right corner. Below the navigation tabs, the '2 Step Verification' section has a toggle switch set to 'OFF'. The 'Parent Pin' section is highlighted with a red box and shows a toggle switch set to 'ON', indicating it is currently enabled. The 'Secure Sign Out' section at the bottom includes a 'Sign out' button.

If a player tries to access their account when a parental pin required , this is the window they will see.



A parent is able to completely review the history of your child's account. They may see all games, conversations, private message history, Robux accounting, and who their friends and followers are.

Ghost accounts

It is possible some children may have more than one account, in addition to their official one. If your child wishes to accept friends, talk on chat etc you need to be prepared to supervise and review their friends lists and interactions, when the parental controls are loosened. This can only be recommended when a youngster has an understanding of how to be safe online.

In summary

The best way for a positive experience on Roblox is or the parent and the child to work together. Learn the ins and outs of the game yourself. This game encourages imagination and creativity, which can be very positive but it does require parental supervision, understanding and moderation of the controls.



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