

Understand OpenDNS FamilyShield

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Introduction

This document describes what OpenDNS FamilyShield is, what it does, and how to use it on a network.

Overview

OpenDNS FamilyShield is a DNS-based content filtering service that helps block access to websites commonly categorized as adult content by using predefined filtering settings.

When to Use FamilyShield

Use FamilyShield when you need a simple DNS-based way to apply basic content filtering:

- Home networks
- Small office environments
- Guest networks
- Lab or kiosk devices that require simplified controls

FamilyShield is typically used when a quick setup is preferred over managing custom filtering policies.

How FamilyShield Works

FamilyShield works by using specific DNS resolver addresses. When a user attempts to access a domain, DNS queries are resolved through the FamilyShield resolvers. If the domain is categorized as restricted by FamilyShield, the DNS response is blocked or redirected based on the service behavior.



Note: Because this is DNS-based, it primarily controls access by domain name resolution.

DNS Server Addresses

Configure these DNS server addresses on the endpoint or on the router/DHCP DNS settings:

- 208.67.222.123
- 208.67.220.123

Verify FamilyShield is in Use

- Verify the device or network is configured to use the FamilyShield DNS server addresses.
- Test name resolution for a known allowed domain and confirm normal resolution.
- If content filtering does not appear to work, verify that no other DNS method overrides the configuration (for example, VPN DNS, browser DNS-over-HTTPS, or manually configured DNS settings).

Limitations

- DNS-based filtering can be bypassed if a user changes DNS settings, uses a VPN, or uses DNS-over-HTTPS (DoH) in the browser.
- Filtering behavior is category-based and is not the same as a full proxy or firewall content inspection solution.