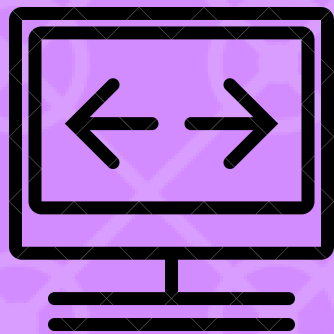


VPNs: What You Need to Know to Keep Your Child Safe



What is a VPN?

"VPN" stands for Virtual Private Network. A VPN is a paid service that allows users to browse the Internet from a secure, private connection using public Wi-Fi.

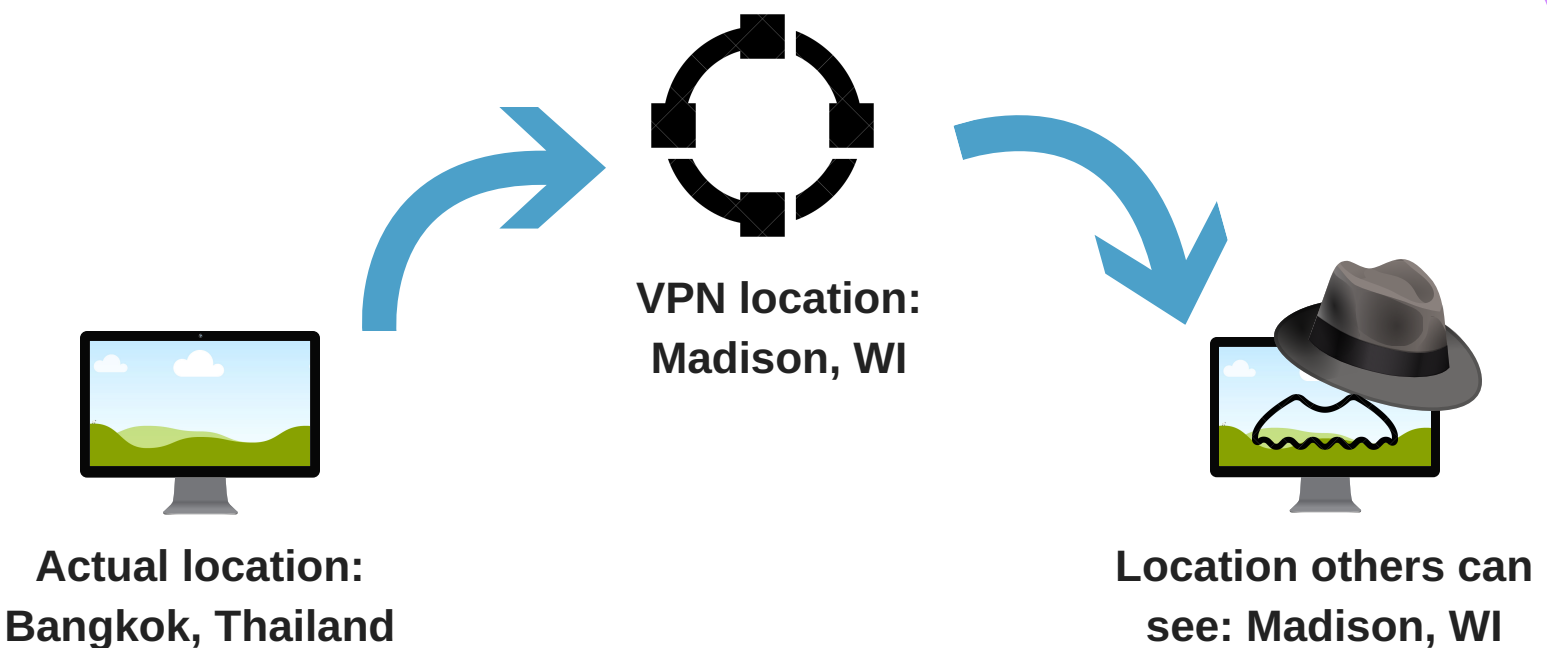


Through this service, users can browse websites without the fear of hackers trying to steal their information.

What are VPNs Used For?

-  To keep browsing history private and secure on public Wi-Fi
-  To bypass regional restrictions in order to access websites not available in the country the computer resides in
-  To bypass regional restrictions to access events in different time zones
-  To get around government censorship laws (difficult to do, even with VPN)
-  To torrent music and videos
-  To access a work computer from home

Bypass What?



A VPN allows a user's location to reflect the location of the VPN server rather than the location of the actual computer. For example, if someone traveled to Thailand and wanted to watch the USA version of Netflix, they could pay a VPN in Madison, WI to show their location as Madison, WI. They could then watch USA Netflix despite not being in the United States.



Pros of a VPN



- ✓ Hacking into computers that use a VPN is very difficult
- ✓ Available on computers and smartphones
- ✓ A customized VPN is relatively easy to get access to
- ✓ Only the user, VPN, and website being used can see what the user is doing



Cons of a VPN



- ✓ Free services can be slow and may sell logged data to advertisers
- ✓ Can be used for piracy purposes depending on the provider
- ✓ Can be used to view illicit materials that are harder to track down than they would be on a public network

Should I Be Using a VPN?



Answer:

Up to you. VPNs are good for protecting users when they are on public Wi-Fi, like when they are in the airport or sitting in a coffee shop. The main determinate as to whether or not to use a VPN is cost. Many only cost about \$5 a month, so it may be worth checking out. Just be sure to use a VPN responsibly and not for any illegal activities.

Check out this link for more info on the cost of VPNs:•

<http://www.techhive.com/article/3158192/privacy/howand-whyyou-should-use-a-vpn-any-time-you-hop-on-the-internet.html>

What If My Child is

Using a VPN?

- Be aware of whether or not it's a paid service. If you know the name of the service, look it up and determine whether or not it's costing you money.
- Ask your child if and why they are using a VPN. They may be using it for illegally downloading music or videos, so it's good to be aware of this in order to cease these activities. Monitor your child's other online activities to assure they aren't using the VPN to access anything they shouldn't be.
- If you suspect your child is using a VPN, look up your IP address (# that identifies your computer). If the number is registered in a different location than where you reside, your child may be using a VPN.