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## Sprint Family Locator



Apr  
13  
2006

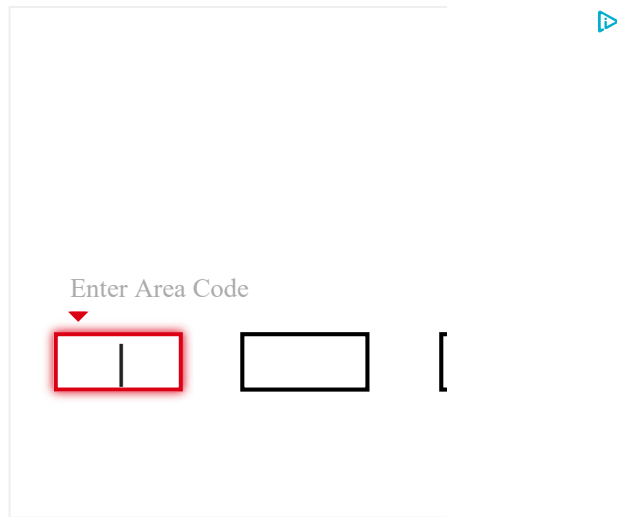
Sprint has launched a new service called Sprint Family Locator. The service allows parents to locate their child on a map through either an internet site or through their phone.

“Sprint Family Locator is a valuable tool that can help parents and guardians have a better sense of their children’s whereabouts when they’re apart,” said Danny Bowman, vice president of product marketing for Sprint. “This is the latest Sprint innovation that uses GPS technology to improve the way families connect, communicate and locate one another.”

Sprint Family Locator requires parents to list up to four phones they want to be able to locate. Registration requires activation on both the “parent” phones as well as the child phones. When a parent wants to find a child, the child can be located on a map along with a street address and surrounding landmarks.

One feature that I think is pretty cool about Sprint Family Locator is that the child is notified by text message whenever a parent is snooping on them. A geofence (actually the exact opposite of a geofence) can be setup to notify parents when a child arrives at a specified location. Reports can also be generated from the internet site.

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Sprint will charge \$10 per month for the Sprint Family Locator and you can register up to four phones and dispatch 100 text messages to each child phone per month. The service to locate someone else is currently available on 17 phones while there are 30 GPS enabled phones which can be located through the Sprint Family Locator service.

Located in [Cell Phone GPS](#), [Geofencing](#), [GPS](#), [LBS](#) on Apr 13, 2006

## 41 Responses

1. While I can see the valid uses of this technology. The technology is quite amazing. I have some pause in unfettered enthusiastic support for the product. My paranoia quickly ran into overdrive with thoughts of an overenthusiastic government tracking me, or worse my wife keeping tack on me or perhaps my boss wanting to know just what I am up to and just where I am when he is paying me.

Now I know that I am being paranoid here, as the government would not breach my right of privacy with this technology, umm wait on, did they not just install a monitoring office in a phone company, are they not doing this already. I guess the government is doing it so that pipe dream of freedom just bit the dust, but I know my partner would not do it, umm, maybe. My boss I know would, the only thing stopping him is his tightwad attitude, he may do the math and find that it is cheaper just to pay me rather than pay extra to find me.

Swagy - April 24th, 2006

- Loven it! I totally agree!

Tiffany - February 13th, 2009

2. Many technological advances are a double edged sword. Just like the advent of video cameras. The technology can be used for good... or to spy on people. We can only hope people use the technology responsibly.

We've already seen both sides of this issue with GPS technology. There have ben court cases of people tracking their spouses with GPS technology. We've also seen cases where people have been in vehicle accidents and were unable to tell 911 operators where they were. GPS

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coordinates were obtained from the caller's phone and lives have been saved. (You can read a little about this [here](#).)

Most phones with built in GPS technology have a way where you can dictate when that information is sent. Most have an option where you can specify that your coordinates are only sent when calling emergency numbers.

Thanks for the comments.

GPS Review - April 26th, 2006

3. The technology is quite amazing and I like it.

Anil Chawla - May 12th, 2006

4. Well, I think it's scary. Imagine your employer using this technology...

Ken - November 14th, 2006

5. I found this article while searching for ways to possibly track smallish children on class field trips or similar (just speculation for now, but it may be implemented in the future). This isn't quite the technology we're thinking about, but we're getting close.

This is obviously no substitute for proper adult supervision, but a child that wanders off outside (or is kidnapped!) could be located more quickly.

As for the "big brother employer" comments, are you people saying you routinely make your employer PAY you to run personal errands or generally goof off?? You've obviously never hired someone who worked directly for you on an hourly basis... imagine paying a plumber or mechanic \$75/hour while he surfs the internet or runs down to a local bar for a quick drink.

Jason - February 2nd, 2007

6. can you say stalker?

maggie - May 1st, 2007

- o Amen! I think that people who use this to track down someone is really kindof insane. Definetely STALKER! If someone wants you to know where they are...they will tell you. And in the end...the person knows you stalked them in the first place.

Tiffany Smith - February 13th, 2009

- My ex husband is using my daughters cell phone GPS to spy on her whereabouts when she is with me every other weekend. This really creeps her out, and quite frankly I don't appreciate the invasion of privacy.

I could understand it if he were using it as a "safety" device, but in this case he is just spying. She is with her other parent....let it be!!

Lisa - April 15th, 2010

7. I agree this technology has its good and bad sides. The good side, as mentioned, is that u can locate children, or whoevers using your phone. Imagine your phone got stolen ... what then? voila — GPS locates it and the police can bag em right there. Employers know their tracking rights extend to the job, and thats it. Its still scary knowing you can be found, but as long as u aint in the red light district, whats to worry about?

Anonymous - July 20th, 2007

8. My family has the service and it's great for keeping up with our kids. Don't worry about your boss tracking you down... it only works with phones on your account. 😊

Ralph - April 3rd, 2008

9. I tried this service as a sprint customer and it did not work. For example, I am in Miami and the system said I was in Kansas. After turning off and on my phone I tried again and then it located me in Miami Beach, like 7 miles from work, which is were I really was. Thumbs down on this service, however excellent concept.

James - May 2nd, 2008

- o I've been using this service for sometime now. The accuracy is horrible, yet they still charge for it. The Sprint Family Locator should be just thrown in with any GPS technology enabled phone. I live in Houston, the 5th or 6th largest city in th US. It has never been any closer than a 600 yard radius, not at any time or at any point. 600 yards!! In fact, on average has accuracy radius within 800 yards to 1.5 miles. That's crazy! Even 600 or 800 yards is a huge radius!! Being half a mile off will not save you or your child... honestly, they could be anywhere.

Frank - January 22nd, 2011

10. Do this technology work if cell phone is turn off?

Shenola - March 16th, 2009

- o No.

Tim - March 16th, 2009

- Yes it does, my phone was dead but my dad was still able to track where I was the whole night..SUCKS!

Ally - June 9th, 2010

- o No it does not. Dad just got a lucky guess.

Frank - January 22nd, 2011

11. Im totally going to track my boyfriend. The only thing that sucks is it sends reminders to that person that they are being spyed on... So i dont know if i should do it or not. But i think he is lying about where he is while im at home taking care of the baby. well see wont we?

kt - April 2nd, 2009

12. Two days ago at 10:30pm I was frantically looking for my Sprint cellular telephone. I knew that I had left it at full volume, so if it was in my house I would have definitely heard it. It was dark outside, and around seven o'clock I was biking around.

So, I took another cell phone, and continuously called it while biking in the hopes of seeing it light up, or hearing it.

Unfortunately, I was unable to find. When I got back to my house I was unable to find it, which made me angry. I sat down at my computer, and just checked my emails not really knowing what to do.

In a few minutes I remembered that sprint is offering a promotion where you can, access Sprint Family Locator. I immediately signed up, and accessed it from my computer. It began loading.

In less than a minute it was showing a dot on a map, exactly where my phone was. I thought that the roads around the dot were something near to me, but I soon realized that they definitely were not.

These roads were in the town next to me, in a trailer park. . . .

I know knew that either my phone was stolen, or taken. Maybe they were planning on giving it back to me the next day.

Anyway, the next morning I drove to that house. Knocked on the door a few times. No answer.. another time... no answer. On the window next to the door they were selling their trailer, and so a number was listed there.

I called that, and immediately got a hold of a woman that had a very hard time speaking english. She handed the phone over to her son. I asked about my phone. He responded with a positive answer. He had my phone.

When I got it back he told me that he would have returned it, and I gave him a \$20.00 reward. Without the sprint GPS locator I probably would never have gotten my phone back.

I think it was unlikely that he was going to return it, because i called 51 times, and he never answered it. I was sending text messages to the phone telling him that I need my phone back.

So, I love Sprint GPS locator, and without it I would never have found my cell phone. Which by the way was a LG Rumor2.

Ben - June 4th, 2009

13. so if i wanted to get this service as the primary account holder, all of the ppl on my account would be notified if i got this??? and it notifies them throughout the day????

chayni - July 4th, 2009

- o That is somewhat correct. Your family would be notified once that they can now be located, but they would NOT be notified through out the day.

Ben - July 13th, 2009

14. I have found that the service tells that the phone is "Off" when it is actually "On" and can be very far off on on Real Time when the phone is where it is. My real time example is I am looking to see if my children have left a weekend place with my ex husband and the service says they are still 100 miles away when they are home safe and sound and their phone is in my hand and turned "on". Another example: I wanted to see where my wife was so I knew where our kids ball game was, knowing she was at the ball game, the service showed her phones as being more than 5 miles away from where she really was. I confirmed this by driving to where I thought the game was and she and her phone was there. When we got home I check the service and it said her phone was "Off" when it was in my hand "on". I would recommend not to rely on this service...

Jamie - July 5th, 2009

15. I have used this service for about a year for my teenage daughter. I have the service set up on her account, so it never sends her a message that it is locating her. If you set up someone on another account to be located, first they have to approve you to do that, then each time they are located it tells them that you located them.

So, for my daughter, she doesn't know that we are locating her. We set up a notification to inform us if she didn't make it to school, or didn't make it home from school. It might seem like a "big brother" type thing, but we have the service for her protection and our piece of mind. Its a small price to pay...and perhaps because she knows she can be located, she will stay the straight and narrow.

Brian - July 28th, 2009

16. Does the technology work if the locator feature in the phone is set for 911 only? I ask because my work recently added the feature to our phones but I have the locator off on the phone itself.. Are they still able to locate?

Robert - August 11th, 2009

- o Yes

Frank - January 22nd, 2011

17. If my child's phone is off can i still track them and can they change their phone to be set for 911 and i not be able to track them because for me it isn't working

Brianna - November 16th, 2009

- o You can not track them if the phone is off. It must be powered for GPS data to be available. However, you can suspend their service if they deliberately turn it off to prevent you from tracking them and since while off, no one can reach them anyhow, why not turn off the service until you get the child's attention? The child can ALWAYS dial 911, even if service is suspended. I would suggest, first infraction of rule "do not turn off phone or GPS" to be one day without phone, texting, voicemail, etc. Second infraction should be three days without service. Third infraction should be one week without service. Fourth infraction should be two weeks without service and if there is a fifth infraction, two weeks without phone service and change their phone number when they

get it back, so their friends will all need to update their phone #s, which will take effort for the child to communicate it to all of them and perhaps they will get the message across to the child. There is no charge for changing the number or suspending or resuming service on a Sprint phone line.

Steven - December 21st, 2009

18. As a teenager, I would rather turn my phone off the whole night and not allow myself to be contacted by anybody rather than my parents snooping. I'm not always where I say I am; not because I'm hiding anything, but sometimes my plans change and I don't feel like going through the hassle of explaining.

So for parents trying to locate their kids to spy on them... would you rather their phone be off and you not able to even call them to see if they're okay, or would you rather ditch the locator and keep in touch through texts and calls?

Your actual service provider can always track the phone if you suspect your kid of being kidnapped instead of your kids feeling like they live with untrusting parents.

Melanie - December 8th, 2009

- o Melanie, there is a problem with your solution to turning off the phone to avoid being tracked. If your parents pay your phone bill and your phone is on their phone account (required to use Sprint Family Locator with your phone), they can call Sprint at any time and have your service suspended (i.e. temporarily shut off) leaving you with no phone service to call friends, no text messaging, no voice mail, etc. with your friends and your parents can punish you for deliberately turning it off to avoid detection, since if you have it off, no one can contact you anyhow, so why not turn it off until you learn to keep the phone on? Do you really want your friends to receive the message "your call can not be completed .. temporarily suspended" which may be obvious you are being punished for something? May want to think about it.  
Steven

Steven - December 21st, 2009

- o No they can not track your child If you suspect they are kidnapped. I just went through this scare. I had the police on one line and Sprint on the other. There is no way to see where you are. They can only track the last tower a phone call was made from. You are wrong.

Mel - June 23rd, 2010

19. My phone actually was stolen. I used Sprint Family Locator, and located my phone. It was in a trailer park not far from my house. We got it back! Almsot had to get the police involved but the theifs gave it back to us

Ben - December 10th, 2009

20. The only problem I've had with this product is occasionally it will track incorrectly. My son was on the phone with his friend when I tracked him and I recieved the location of his friend, rather than my

son. I don't think it works when the person you are trying to track is speaking on the phone.

Tina - March 21st, 2010

21. i think that this technology is absolutely absurd. It seems ridiculous to know where your child, spouse, employee, etc. are whenever you so choose. I understand the safety reasons and the untrustworthy teenagers, but sometimes what we do not know will not hurt us. This generations privacy is almost nondescript.. Why is it necessary to have access to someone's location all the time? It may be bring peace of mind for the person tracking, but for the person being tracked it is very frustrating especially when the locator mis-locates or one is not lying about where he or she is going. There are other ways to go about things like this... whatever happened to good old fashioned "trust". Yes, some people break trust and are forced to build it back up, but regardless this is a bit extreme.

Emily - May 10th, 2010

- o I trust my daughter, but I don't trust the rest of the world with my daughter. We never track her whereabouts, we just get the safety notifications telling us that she is where she should be at particular times. Is she in the vicinity of her dorm room at 2:00 AM? She is aware that the service is in place and is fine with it.

I will use this technology with my younger kids when they are old enough to have cellphones too.

Brian - May 10th, 2010

22. OK. I work in the technology field and I have this to say and before I even get to this I will tell you that I AM TELLING THE TRUTH. My spouse evidently is very untrusting (wish I would have found this out 3 years ago). The night before last, I had taken my grandson to his sporting event. It was just him and I (he is under 10 years old). It was over about 8pm and I took him back to his mother's house. When I got there, she had asked me if I could help her move a few things in the apartment and I did. I got a call from my wife wondering where I was. I told her and said that I would be home in few minutes when I was done. When I got home, she was pissed and proceeding to ask me where I was. I told her again. She told me that she used the Family Locator to check on me and it said I was clear across town. I told her that couldn't be; that she must have read the map wrong. I'll skip rest of the gory stuff, but later I checked the history and sure enough the coordinates showed me over a mile away from my exact location. Nothing I say will convince her otherwise. This is a second wife and she would think my daughter would stick up for me, so I wouldn't even suggest that she talk to her. Besides I am mad that she was spying, even though I wasn't doing anything wrong ... So does anyone know of instances where this has been the case using this service? This could end up in court eventually, if you know what I mean .... 😞

Steve - July 22nd, 2010

- o I have had that issue, but you need to look at two both bits of information that the site gives you. It will tell you a location, but more importantly it will give you the accuracy of the location. I have had times where it gave me an accuracy ring of 1.5 miles,

clearly not enough to “locate” someone, but it usually gives it within 15 yards or something like that.

Brian - July 22nd, 2010

23. I have Family Locator and in late August had reason to use it. I was tracking a phone in Indiana from Florida. It worked just fine within 15 to 20 yards. Then I found the phone in a completely different location at 4am. The question is as follows: Can the locator place the phone in a different house without it physically being in that location. I don't believe it was a fluke as the phone was in this house twice within 24 hours. If you can answer this it will be greatly appreciated. Thanks for your help and THANKS FOR FAMILY LOCATOR!!!!

Ted - October 6th, 2010

24. Have had the service for about 9 mos. I have three kids 12-17...I basically use the service when I call and don't get an answer, the service is good in that it gives a GENERAL idea of where the phone is. So if you know best friend Tom's address then you pretty much know where ur kid is, when the location comes back one block over from best friend Tom's house. HOWEVER since it gives a GENREAL location you should NOT feel safe that you will be able to find your kid if you need an EXACT location.

Candice - October 24th, 2010

25. Can a parent track their child if the child turns off their gps off?

Samantha - November 25th, 2010

- o No

Candice - January 27th, 2011

26. First of all, in order to activate the Sprint Family locator for the first time upon adding it to your plan, you have to respond to the text received on the TARGET phone. However, if at anytime the service is cut for let's say deactivation due to non payment, if your bill is paid within 2 weeks, you check the box to reactivate and you just start using it again as usual.

Frank - January 22nd, 2011

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