TECHNOLOGY LETS PARENTS TRACK THEIR KIDS.

For every mother who ever told her kids that she had eyes in the back of her head, modern technology can now do one better: It allows Mom and Dad to watch their child's every move, even from across town. Some wonder whether keeping such a close eye on kids does more harm than good.

Mark Pawlick says he used to live in constant worry about his teenage kids — especially his stepdaughter, Jessica.

Even at 10 years old, while growing up in a suburb north of Boston, Jessica Fairbanks was in and out of trouble. She had tried drinking and smoking, and had developed a habit of constantly lying to her parents. When it came time for her to get her driver's license, Jessica's parents were scared to death.

So, Mark Pawlick bought what's called a black box and hid it in Jessica's car. By using global positioning system technology to fix its location every second or so, the device is essentially an electronic tattletale. It automatically e-mails or calls Pawlick every time Jessica drives too fast, or goes somewhere she isn't supposed to.

As soon as she crosses the line, Mom and Dad know about it, and Jessica hears about it.

With GPS technology getting cheaper, smaller and better, most any cell phone can be a tracking device for just a few extra dollars a month. A black box, like the one made by Alltrack that's in Jessica's car, costs a few hundred dollars, plus a monthly fee. But, it also gives parents a way to retaliate in real time.