

YUBO



Wirral Contextual Safeguarding and Compass teams have recently seen an increase in children and young people using this app. This has resulted in some of our young people being reported missing meeting other peers through this app.

We would like professionals to be aware of the app, which may help during discussions with their young people, parents and carers when undertaking visits or direct work.

Yubo, previously known as Yellow, is extremely popular among teens. It mimics adult social media & dating apps like Tinder, it has been referred to by social media commentators as being a dating app for teens – as such there is scope for such a platform to be misused.

What is Yubo?

Yubo calls itself a platform to chat and livestream with friends.

In the iOS App Store, it is rated for users 17+ and on Google Play, it is marked 'T' (Teen).

Children can register on Yubo with an active mobile phone number.

New users need to provide personal details such as name, date of birth, phone number and more. A website called 'Yoti' allows the user to verify the account. A yellow tick appears on verified profiles.

Users need to provide access to microphone and GPS.

Users of the app can swipe right to say, 'yes' and left for 'no', exactly as on Tinder and other dating apps. On Yubo, if both parties say 'yes', they are matched and can then chat and follow each other on Snapchat or Instagram.

Users can also host live video streams or chats which are open for viewing. So, strangers and friends alike can view such streamed events!

Concerns (Taken from 'Mobicip' - Cyber Security blogging Website)

1 - Poor Age Restrictions/Privacy Settings: Although the terms and conditions state that Yubo is strictly for users above 13, there is no credible age-gate that can prevent a young child from joining the platform. It is almost impossible to verify the identity of a Yubo user.

2 - Livestream: Children can initiate live video streams of their day, in their bedroom or any other location. Any number of strangers can view the stream and can send questions or interact via live text chat. These are not restricted to friends alone and are often open to strangers; users are then encouraged to add unknown attendees/viewers as friends during the stream. These live streams can also be recorded.

3 - Multi Platform Accessibility: A user can connect other social media accounts e.g., Snapchat, Instagram, Skipper with the Yubo account. Therefore, it's easier for a potential for others to track down and our young people across several platforms.

4 - Inappropriate Content: According to the Mobicip site, the App Guidelines do not state that profiles posting adult/inappropriate content will be removed.

Safety Measures for Parents to Put in Place:

Remember to pay attention to how children are using social media. Pay attention to their actions/behaviour with their smartphones. Notice if they are asking for privacy or running to the bedroom or bathroom to use their smartphone.

Keep open lines of communication with your children. Discuss their usage of social media and determine if they are using the app or wanting to start using it. If they are, first consider whether your child is emotionally mature enough to be exposed to social media, the contents of social media speak openly about the risks.

The Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership has advice and guidance in respect of Online Safety, accessible via the following link.

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/online-safety-2/>