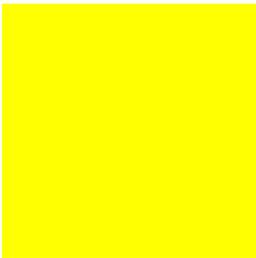




3 apps parents should know about

1. Yubo (Formally Yellow)



Content

Yubo is often referred to as the ‘Tinder for teens’. Children and young people can upload a profile picture and up to five more photos, and choose to connect with boys, girls or both sexes, communicating via their existing Instagram and Snapchat accounts. Users can write personal information about themselves, and use emojis.

How old?

Users need to be at least 13 to sign up for the app, and have parental permission. Once they’ve done so, 13-17-year-olds should only be able to connect with people within their own age category. It’s worth noting that you can connect to the app using an incorrect date of birth. There is an 18+ version of the app and if you sign up using a fake date of birth that makes you over 18, you will be contacted by adults and could end up involved in adult conversations.

Contact

The nature of the app means users will be connecting with other teens they haven’t met, living within their area. They can look through a series of profiles and swipe left or right to either like or dislike another person’s profile. Once two people have both liked each other’s profiles and become a match, they are given access to each other’s Snapchat and Instagram accounts.

Things to be aware of

Yubo is considered a ‘teen dating’ app, and, by its very nature, it has risks. As it’s been linked to sexting incidents amongst teens, it’s advisable to talk to your child about what is and isn’t appropriate to share, and also the risks involved if they move from the app onto other platforms to continue talking to people they’ve connected with.

Like Tinder, the app only works if the location is enabled so you need to share your location if you want to sign up. Users can report others on the app by clicking the flag icon in the top left-hand corner of the profile that they want to report. They will then be asked to select from a drop-down list of reasons for the report.



3 apps parents should know about

2. Monkey



Content

Monkey is a chat app where people are randomly connected with other Snapchat users from around the world within their age range and have an initial 10-second video chat. If someone wants to continue the conversation, they can tap the 'time' button to keep chatting. If both people in the conversation tap 'time' then the call will continue. After the conversation, they can add each other to Snapchat.

How old?

This app is rated as 13+ but there is no age verification required.

Contact

Young people will make video contact with strangers and be able to communicate with them for 10 seconds or longer depending on whether there is a mutual decision to carry on chatting (by tapping 'time'). If they continue to chat then they will be able to add each other to Snapchat or Instagram.

Things to be aware of

10 seconds is not enough time to get to know someone before deciding whether you want to continue chatting. The speed of response could cause users to give away more information than they would choose to if they had the chance to think about it.

Young people need to be aware that the person they are communicating with is a stranger so they shouldn't disclose too much personal information – and with no robust age verification in place, users could enter any age they want, pretending to be younger than they are.

Monkey has recently come under fire as there have been incidents of adults trying to communicate with teens and indecent images being shared. Monkey does state a zero-tolerance policy for misuse of the app and say they have moderators 24/7.

Click on the following link for safety instructions if you want to report any safeguarding issues from the app. <https://monkey.cool/safety>



3 apps parents should know about

3. Musical.ly



musical.ly

Tip:

The best way to get an idea of what your teenager could be getting up to on these apps is to download them yourself, have a browse and see what you find. You can always delete the app again afterwards.

Content

Young people can record their own songs or video themselves miming along to music. They can edit the videos by speeding up or slowing them down. The videos can then be posted to their followers and shared elsewhere, for example on Facebook or WhatsApp.

How old?

The terms and conditions of the app state that it is not suitable for young people under the age of 13 and that users should be 18 years of age. However, many younger teens are using it. It is worth considering that there is the possibility of swearing and users dressing in what adults may consider an inappropriately sexual way in some videos.

Contact

Many young people enjoy using this app to express their creativity to other music lovers, watch videos from other users and connect with their friends.

Young people can create an account by using an email address or through their Facebook or Twitter account. The videos are open to comments and young people can follow each other, like and comment on videos. They can add hashtags when posting videos and search for trending hashtags too.

Things to be aware of

Any app where users can 'live stream' videos can be risky as it isn't possible to moderate the content that is being viewed live.

Users can block other users if they receive any nasty comments. They just need to select the icon with three dots on the right-hand corner of the profile page of the user they want to block and select 'block this user'. They can also report any abuse selecting the appropriate option from the 3-dot dropdown menu.