



YUBO – Online risk Update 2024

DRNG ALERT: YUBO – Make Real Friends Live – 13 - 17

Dear Members,

A report has been submitted from one of our partners at Multiagency Child Exploitation Hub (MACE) regarding the exploitative risks posed by YUBO.

This application presents high risks to young people exposing them to potential child sexual exploitation.

Risks:

Content and Contact risks

What is Yubo?

Yubo is a social media platform, available on iOS and Android. It's free to use, with a range of additional features – known as 'Powers' – available to purchase on a monthly subscription. Yubo features live streaming and is extremely popular among young people, with 4.7 million users in the UK alone.

It has been involved in controversy since it launched (originally under the name Yellow), being dubbed by media as **"Tinder for teens"** due to its swipe-to-match functionality which mimics the adult dating app.

Despite being age-rated 13+, Yubo has been criticised for the way some young users have been exposed to inappropriate content and harassment. This has led to some schools issuing warnings advising parents against allowing their children to use the app. Users connect and chat one-to-one or in groups. Users can also start and join live-streaming video chats known as 'lives'. These lives can feature up to 10 streamers (those who are broadcasting) and an unlimited number of viewers.

You enter a mobile phone number to sign up, which you then verify by entering a code sent to your phone.

Platform guidelines state that users must be aged 13 or over (Apple's App Store recommends 17+, and the Google Play Store categorises it as suitable for 'Teens'). Anyone under the age of 17 must confirm they have a parent's or guardian's permission to create a profile – but there is no age verification process.

Yubo does, however, remove accounts that it suspects may have a falsified age. To prevent this, a user can verify an account by providing a photo holding an ID by their face. They can also use a system called [Yoti](#), a digital ID app, and connect it to their Yubo account.

In 2017, Yubo introduced two separate communities in response to safety concerns: one for users aged 13 to 17, and one for those 18 and over. In theory, this means nobody over the age of 17 can interact with younger users – though that doesn't mean they will be protected from harassment or abuse and, again, it would be feasible for younger or older users to lie about their age.

Users swipe right on someone's profile picture to "like" new friends, or swipe left if they don't want to connect with them – similar to Tinder. If the user receives a "like" in return, they become friends and can start messaging each other.

If you have location settings enabled, you can find and connect with other people in nearby geographical area – again drawing comparison with Tinder. You can also add friends using their mobile number.

Content

Users can upload a profile pictures, and choose to add and connect with various groups, write personal information about themselves, and use Emojis. Live streaming video is one of the main features of the app, each live session can host up to ten streamers with an unlimited number of viewers, any user can start their own live stream. The app also offers a swiping feature to swipe and add other people profiles (with similar features to dating applications) where further communication and discussions can be held in private rooms.

Contact

The nature of the app means users will be connecting with others they haven't met, living within local or international areas. Users can swipe through a series of profiles and swipe another person's profile. Once two people have both added each other's profiles and become friends, they can message each other. The risks of which are like that of other social media including bullying, hate speech, inappropriate and contact including sexual exploitation and even scams. In the MACE report a child have been exploited to share indecent images with an adult perpetrator which has received an appropriate Police response.

Resource, support and report

Parentzone Local – Advice and Guides on a range of online issues

www.middlesbroughchildrenmatter.co.uk/children-and-families/parent-zone/

Internet Matters YUBO online safety guide

[Yubo Social Media Privacy Settings - Internet Matters](#)

Childline - 0800 11111 available for advice via their website www.childline.org.uk

Kooth Online - Free and anonymous Well-being and crisis support available at www.kooth.com

CEOP - Report online sexual abuse or the way someone has been communicating with a child online www.ceop.police.uk

Yubo online safety Guidance hub

Yubo themselves recognise how risky this application is for young people, noting that it can place children at risk of exploitation on their own website for more details read their FAQ's

www.yubo.live/faq