

E safety Update



1. Controversial 'online reputation' app PEEPLE March 2016 launches

When news of the idea emerged last year, the app's creators, Julia Cordray and Nicole McCullough, came under intense criticism as Peep - accused of being 'Yelp for humans' - was feared to hold potential for cyber bullying and online defamation. The initial app design allowed negative reviews to be live for at least 48 hours before they could be re-futed.

However, several tweaks have been made in the run up to launch, including that there is now no time limit before a negative review can be challenged, users have full control over what goes live on their profile, and there is no more star rating - just a tally of the total number of recommendations each user has received.

However, a purchasable element to the app is The Truth License, which, when subscribed to, allows users to access everything that has been written about a user, whether it has been published live on their profile or not.

"In October 2015 Peep announced itself to the world," the announcement of the launch stated. "The reputation app promised to connect people with each other through honest reviews. The world talked back. People believed Peep threatened their privacy, was prone to cruel bullying, threats, and abuse.

Link: <https://www.research-live.com/article/news/controversial-online-reputation-app-peep-launches/id/5003922>

2. Bromsgrove school PE teacher banned for life for messaging pupils

A PE teacher who sent "unacceptable" emails and text messages to two students has been banned for life

Link: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-hereford-worcester-35710374>

For more information about e safety :

- go to <http://www.blackpoolaspireacademy.co.uk>
- come into school and talk to a member of Student Services

March 2016

3. Linked to bullying and even murder, can anonymous apps like Kik ever be safe?

Nicole Madison Lovell, a 13-year-old school girl from Virginia, chatted with an 18-year-old man over anonymous messaging app Kik before he allegedly killed her in January. Since then the app – which boasts some 240 million registered users and requires no phone number or name – has been the subject of scrutiny.

In response, Kik has handed over data to the murder investigation, updated its guide for parents, and asked the Apple Store to boost its age rating from nine to 12, with company representatives stressing teens between 13 and 18 should get parental permission to install the app.

Kik is, of course, not the only anonymous app hit with safety scares. Yik Yak, which allows people within a particular radius to create posts anonymously and upvote or downvote other posts, has faced controversy for hosting racial abuse and violent threats. Secret, an app where users can share their secrets anonymously, has also faced scrutiny over cyber-bullying and security.

These might be more extreme cases, but can these anonymous apps ever be truly safe? Stephen Balkam, founder of the Family Online Safety Institute, can see their value for teens looking to express themselves or explore sensitive areas such as sexuality. While Sonia Livingstone, a professor in media and communications at the London School of Economics, says that anonymity doesn't inherently encourage negative outcomes. "It encourages intimacy and honesty as well as manipulation and nastiness," she says.

Dealing with abuse

However, the design of some apps make them worse than others, according to Balkam. Yik Yak's geolocation tool, for example, particularly concerns him because it limits user interactions with others within a 1.5 mile radius. This has the potential to create an online world for rumours and hate which can then spread offline in small communities. Balkam believes in-line messaging, where users get prompts asking their age or pointing out features and security settings while they use the app, can help improve safety. He says reporting mechanisms and blocking tools should be easy to find, and that a team should be in place responding to those reports so they're not just landing in a neglected mailbox.

Link: <http://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2016/mar/07/anonymous-apps-cyber-bullying-security-safety-kik-yik-yak-secret>

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4. "It's dangerous when parents get too involved": Headteacher speaks out about parent 'trolling' on social media

A HEAD TEACHER has spoken out with concern at how parent 'trolling' could be dangerous to a child's development.

Sarah Welch, head teacher at Gosfield School in Halstead, has said parents could be setting a bad example by arguing over Facebook about their children's problems. She said she feared the ever-changing world of social media is escalating playground disputes, with some parents naming and shaming other people's children.

She said: "It is becoming very hard for people when they have 24 hour access to social networks and have contact with others all the time.

"Children should be left to develop good relationships and cope with things in a way which we do not let them. I have known of incidents where parents have come on Facebook and have moaned at each other over their children's issues.

"The students fall out, its a way of life, but it's dangerous when the parents get involved." She said she felt parents must learn to take a step back, as they are too quick to intervene, thanks to the immediacy of Facebook.

She said: "Parents need advice on how to deal with social media, do they try and access their child's Facebook account? Or do they just trust that everything is alright? They feel nervous about the fact they are not keeping on top of it.

"We need to help children create spaces where they are not bombarded by social media. In the past it was easy to leave your issues at the school gates and go home to your family, but now we have phones on us all the time it's difficult to escape it."

She thought the fact parents were getting involved was not modelling the best behaviour, and it is a growing problem.

She said: "Teenage years are difficult as it's a balancing act over how much to get involved.

"As a school we want to help the parents as well as children learn how to deal with social media, as it's a changing world all the time."

Link: http://www.halsteadgazette.co.uk/news/14318821._It_s_dangerous_when_parents_get_too_involved___Headteacher_speaks_out_about_parent__trolling__on_social_media/