



**SOUTH WEST POLICE**  
**ROCU**  
Regional Organised Crime Unit



## Social Media APP Bulletin

### FaceTime

FaceTime is a video calling app that uses the internet to make calls making this a free way of contacting people if using Wi-Fi; the app is similar to Skype and WhatsApp etc. The app was developed for iOS, an operating system used for mobile devices manufactured by Apple and can be used on a range of apple devices such as iPhone, iPad and even Apple Watch. This is not available on android devices.

Contact can only be made with people you already have a mobile number for. The required age to use this app is 13 and over however there are no specific restrictions in place.

You can block contacts from contacting you via FaceTime as you would any typical unwanted phone call on a smart phone. The blocking feature allows you to block calls (including video) and messages from unwanted contacts.

If you're using an iPhone, FaceTime automatically registers your phone number; this can easily be changed under the settings function.

Further information on FaceTime settings can be found on the following site <https://support.apple.com/en-gb/HT204380>



**SOUTH WEST POLICE**  
**ROCU**  
Regional Organised Crime Unit



## Social Media APP Bulletin

### Chatstep

Chatstep is a website that allows users to create and/or enter an online chatroom, this is expected to be made into an app for android and ios. The site can however be easily accessed on a mobile device via the internet.

Chat logs are not stored allowing users to message privately and share photos easily. All nicknames, messages and images are encrypted on the users' device before they are sent to the website.

A chatroom can be created on the website by a user; the user can create the chatrooms name and add an option password. Anyone can join an open chatroom and invites can be sent out to password protected chatrooms. The chatrooms can accommodate up to 50 users and uploaded data is deleted when you leave the chatroom.

The site is aimed at individuals aged 18 or over. Due to the anonymity and encryption this leaves the site vulnerable to the sharing of indecent images. Individuals are also at risk of cyberbullying, there is a method to report unwanted contact and there is an option to "mute" the unwanted contact.

**- OFFICIAL -**



**SOUTH WEST POLICE**  
**ROCU**  
Regional Organised Crime Unit



## Social Media APP Bulletin

### Holla

Holla is a random chat app that matches people in video chats around the world. The app is available in both iOS and Android and is aimed at individuals over 18. Users under the age of 13 are not permitted under the app rules, however there are no restrictions in place to prevent this; Holla asks that users report any underage user accounts.

Special effects include filters, video effects, and match random people via interests, the special effects make the app appealing to young people.

There are several similar random chat apps available and have featured in cases of indecent exposure of adults towards children or suspects grooming children to facilitate indecent images of children.

Safety features include a report button is featured on the video chat screen and user profile screen and Holla utilizes artificial intelligence visual recognition software to monitor its community 24/7; the software automatically scans for inappropriate behaviour and immediately bans any users with suspicious behaviour. It's not known how effective this software is and moderators of the app are required to review all banned and flagged activities.

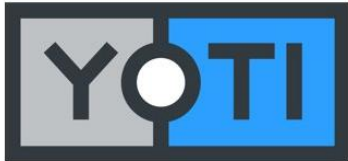
Details of the app can be found on the website <https://holla.world/>



**SOUTH WEST POLICE**  
**ROCU**  
Regional Organised Crime Unit



## Social Media APP Bulletin



ChildLine and the Internet Watch Foundation have come together to provide a service where children can request the removal of sexual images of themselves which have been shared online. As part of that process the child would be asked to provide a link to where the image is stored online, rather than send the image itself.

The child is also required to verify their identity and age and this is done through the YOTI app. YOTI will not store images of the child's ID following the verification process.

Below are a couple of online resources which contain details regarding this service:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/sexting> - There is a section which covers what you can do if you've lost control of a sexual image and refers to the YOTI app.

<https://contentreporting.childline.org.uk> – This is the portal where you can report images and videos for take down and again refers to using the app to verify age.

**- OFFICIAL -**



**SOUTH WEST POLICE**  
**ROCU**  
 Regional Organised Crime Unit



# Social Media APP Bulletin



With the internet and apps evolving every week it can be easy to feel like technology is moving too fast for us, however it doesn't change the fact that young people will always seek to interact with technology and will always require our advice and support when online.

Below are a number of resources to help educate adults and young people around the issue of online safety and app security:

The **UK safer internet centre**; where you can find e-safety tips, advice and resources to help children and young people stay safe online. For help and advice contact: 0344 3814772 or [helpline@saferinternet.org.uk](mailto:helpline@saferinternet.org.uk)

The **Revenge porn hotline**; the only organisation providing such a service in the UK, providing support and advice to the victims of the non-consensual sharing of intimate images and cyber-enabled blackmail (known as sextortion).

**POSH (The Professionals Online Safety Helpline)**; The Professionals Online Safety Helpline is a free service for all professionals and volunteers working with children and young people. It provides signposting, advice and mediation to resolve online safety issues staff face about themselves, such as protecting professional identity and online harassment, or problems affecting young people, for example cyber-bullying or sexting issues. Where appropriate we can also provide advice or facilitate in the removal on harmful content. POSH have created good relationships with many of the giant tech companies and are a great place to start if you have any concerns with a particular site or App.

[UK Safer internet centre](#) [Professionals Online Safety Helpline](#) [Revenge porn helpline](#) [Protecting young people from online grooming](#)

**- OFFICIAL -**