



LIKE is a free video creation and editing app similar to TikTok. It has a global community of over 200 million users who can create any type of video, add their own special effects and then upload and share them with the world. The app is largely used to create short music videos which users can star in and edit anyway they want using the "Magic Video Maker." Users share their videos on the platform as well as having the option to share across other social media outlets such as Facebook and Instagram. Due to the suggestive content that is available on the app, it has a recommended age of 16+, although the app store rate it as 17+.



What parents need to know about

LIKE



ALL VIDEOS ARE PUBLIC



All user profiles on LIKE are public which means that every video that is uploaded can be viewed by anyone. This is a privacy setting that can't be changed. In addition, on creating an account, anybody who views your child's video can also download, save and share them, albeit this is a feature that can be turned off. Nonetheless, this places your child's privacy at risk given they can't control who is viewing their videos and potentially sharing them elsewhere.

SEXUAL PREDATORS AND BULLYING

Once a video has been uploaded and shared on LIKE, anybody can comment on it. There have been reports of sexually suggestive comments made towards children, opening the door to potential child grooming and/or child sexual exploitation risks. Similarly, children may be vulnerable to derogatory or abusive language which could escalate into harassment or bullying.



ACCESS TO INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

In a Facebook post from April 2019, LIKE admitted to banning over 400 accounts during a 6 day period due to matters relating to harassment, fraud, pornographic material, violence, gambling and terrorism. There are no safe search features on the app which means there is a chance your child could potentially watch mature or inappropriate content with relative ease.



EASY FOR MINORS TO SET-UP

Despite the recommended age limit of 16, there are no verification measures in place to help restrict access. Setting up a profile is extremely easy and all that is required is access to a mobile phone. This is a concern for young children who have limited knowledge of how to stay safe online.



PRIVATE MESSAGING



As well as being able to comment publicly, LIKE also allows users to private message one another. This again opens the door for strangers to contact your child online and build a relationship, this time without being seen. There have been reported cases of sexual grooming and children receiving requests to send inappropriate images via direct message.

DESIGNS TO INCREASE APP USAGE

The more your child engages with the app, the more 'Exp.' they can earn. This, in turn, can help them achieve higher levels and unlock Privileges to enhance their videos. Similarly, the Leaderboard feature within the app rewards users that receive the most likes every day, again encouraging children to produce more content. Both of these features could contribute towards increased screen time for your child.

Lv.24
Lv.62
Lv.88

ABILITY TO STREAM VIDEOS LIVE

Once a user has achieved a certain level, LIKE grants them access to stream their videos live with viewers able to engage and post comments as the video is running. This means your child could receive harmful or upsetting comments during a live recording with no filter, as well as viewing other users live streams, which may contain inappropriate or disturbing content.



IN-APP PURCHASES



LIKE also has a Wallet feature in which users can earn beans during special LIVE events or during their own live streams. They can also purchase diamonds directly from the app for anything between 99p and £99.99, with one tap and one confirmation screen, potentially costing the bill payer a lot of money.

Top Tips For Parents

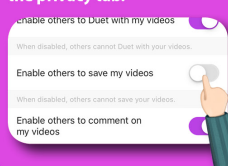
1 DISABLE OR RESTRICT PRIVATE MESSAGING

The ability to private message one another on LIKE means that your child could receive messages or media from complete strangers and potentially engage in conversations with people they don't know. In the privacy settings, this feature can be disabled or set to just friends allowing a degree of control over who can privately contact your child.



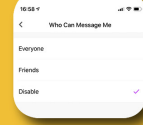
2 DISABLE ABILITY FOR OTHERS TO SAVE YOUR VIDEOS

Saving and sharing your child's videos to their own device means that anyone could upload and share those videos whenever and wherever they like, without your permission. You can disable this feature in your child's profile settings via the privacy tab.



3 TURN OFF COMMENTS IN PRIVACY SETTINGS

The public nature of LIKE means that anybody can comment on your child's videos. Whilst many users may be positive and supportive of what your child is doing online, others may be critical or quite nasty. If you are worried about other users and what they may say, you can completely disable comments within the app's privacy settings.



4 BLOCK USERS WHO HARASS, BULLY AND OFFEND

If you are concerned about your child being harassed, bullied or receiving persistent offensive comments from specific users, you can 'block' these individuals. This can be done on the offenders users profile page. Once blocked, the ability to comment on your child's video or private message will be removed although videos will still remain visible.



5 TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT ONLINE DANGERS

Talking to your child about staying safe online will help them stay alert to any potential dangers and give them a more enjoyable experience. Learning how to report inappropriate content and discussing this with your child may ensure they recognise anything malicious and become more vigilant whilst using the app. Similarly, discussing what is acceptable and setting limits on what can and can't be posted online may help to ensure your child avoids any unwanted pitfalls.

6 STICK TO THE RECOMMENDED AGE LIMIT

LIKE suggest that the recommended age limit for the app is 16+. Reviews of the app suggest that users may post mature or sexually provocative material which isn't tightly regulated and could be accessed or accidentally viewed by your child. Ensuring you adhere to the age limit and encouraging your child to be open about what they're viewing will help you keep an eye on what content your child is coming across on the app.

Meet our expert

Pete Badh is a writer with over 10+ years in research and analysis. Working within a specialist area for West Yorkshire Police, Pete has contributed work which has been pivotal in successfully winning high profile cases in court as well as writing as a subject matter expert for industry handbooks.



SOURCES:
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