



## SOCIAL MEDIA APP BULLETIN – March

Author – Spencer Akerman (CSE Analyst at South West Regional Organised Crime Unit)  
[Spencer.Akerman@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Spencer.Akerman@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk)

This document contains apps/websites of note that have appeared in Child Sexual Exploitation or Abuse cases in the Southwest region for the month stated above. The document may also contain apps/websites that are prominent in other regions or are believed to be an emerging issue.

If you have any apps you believe may be used in the facilitation of CSE/A please send an email to the above address.

### Tagged

Tagged is a typical chat and dating app which highlights people who are close to you once you match. It allows members to browse the profiles of any other members, and share tags and virtual gifts. The app allows browsing by age and location (users must be at least 18 years old to have an account on Tagged).

In addition this app supports live feeds where people who have been selected as friends can watch.

### ***Case Study***

A male connected with a 14 year old girl on the site (who stated her age as 18), within 30 minutes of commencing conversation he had moved the conversation to the WhatsApp platform.

Within an Hour the male had turned the conversation sexual and invited the female to meet. The meet occurred 3 days later, where the police had been informed of the meeting and intercepted the offender.

## Bosco family safety and locator

The Bosco app is incorporates artificial intelligence technology which alerts parents to incidents in their children's lives based on photo data. Along with screening voice calls to detect mood changes, the app updates parents when a child has received a nude image or a call from an unknown number. It also notifies them when a child has been unfollowed by more than three friends in an hour, a sign that cyberbullying may have occurred.

The app is free to download but charges a small monthly usage fee. As with any app that promises to protect children online, research must be done to assess what protection the app offers and the limitations of the software. For example Bosco does not monitor text messages or snapchat.

### *In the News*

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/parents-using-bosco-app-are-not-spying-insists-developer-vkrjxfmg>

## YOTI

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.

Where to find help?

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). <https://revengepornhelpline.org.uk/>

**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 of 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.

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/professionals-online-safety-helpline>