

Yik Yak

Parent Guide

A quick guide to what you need to know

Age Rating: 13+



What is it?

Yik Yak is a **social media app** that allows users to **create and take part anonymously** in **discussion threads from users within a five mile radius**. Threads are called **'Yaks'**.

Users can **'upvote'** and **'downvote'** posts: **the equivalent of liking and disliking**. How much engagement your threads and posts receive constitute what is called **'Yakarma'**.

Because it's **anonymous**, users within a thread are **identified with randomly generated icons**, such as a **sailboat, socks, compass** and so on. The **original poster** is identified with an **'original poster' icon**.

You can **see, comment and upvote 'Nationwide Top Yaks'**, which are **the most popular Yaks in your country**. You **cannot downvote** these Yaks.

Yik Yak **shut down in 2017** due to **allegations of cyberbullying and downvoting posts that mentioned competitors**, but was **re-released in 2021**.

What are the risks?

Yik Yak is designed to **give users freedom to explore topics and opinions by allowing them total anonymity**. Whilst this might be **liberating** in some way, it also means that **users are able to post hateful or bullying content without being identified**.

The **locality of the threads** can also be an issue. Although it's anonymous, **if your child did reveal personal information or discussed their exact location**, anyone within that thread could be **able to locate them**.

What safety features are there?

The new version of Yik Yak has **strict community guidelines**. If your child sees an **upsetting post**, they can **'downvote' the post and report it to moderators**. If it **breaks the guidelines or terms of service**, the user can be **immediately banned** from the app.

Once a post reaches an **overall -5 in downvotes**, it will be **deleted**.

The new Yik Yak has a **'Cuss Buster' feature**. When switched on, it will **filter out swear words from all threads**.

What else should I do?

Yik Yak is great for figuring out **what's happening in an immediate area**. The **anonymity** certainly does give users **a level of freedom**, but it's important to **remind your child to be responsible**.

Make sure that your child **understands how to report a post**, and encourage them to **come to you if they encounter any unpleasant posts or comments**.