



Safe on Social

Melon

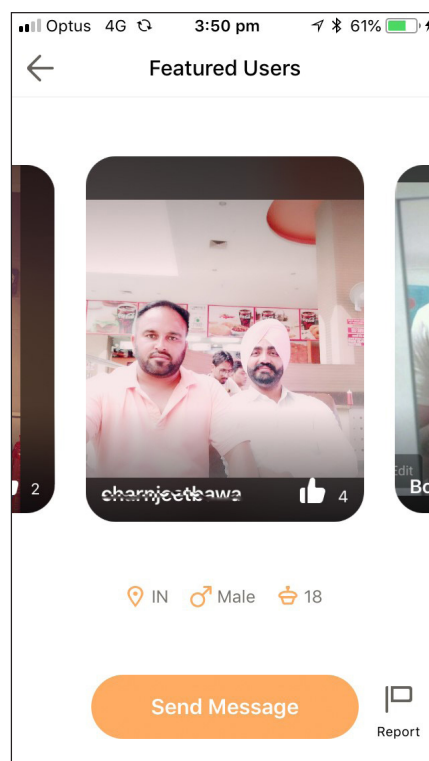
Cheat Sheet

Melon

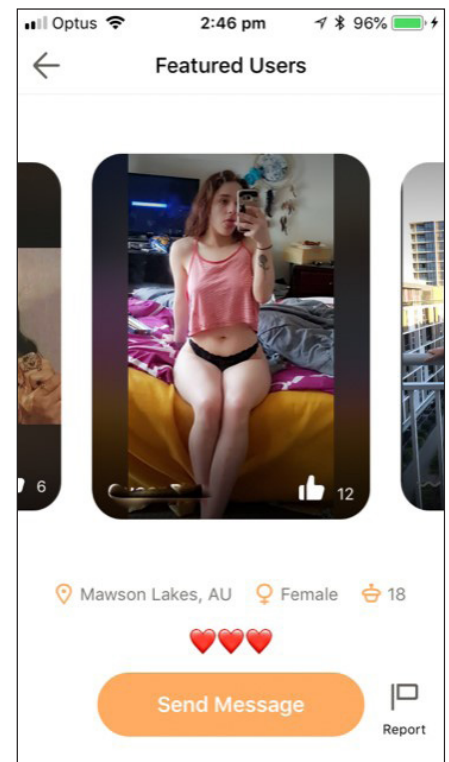
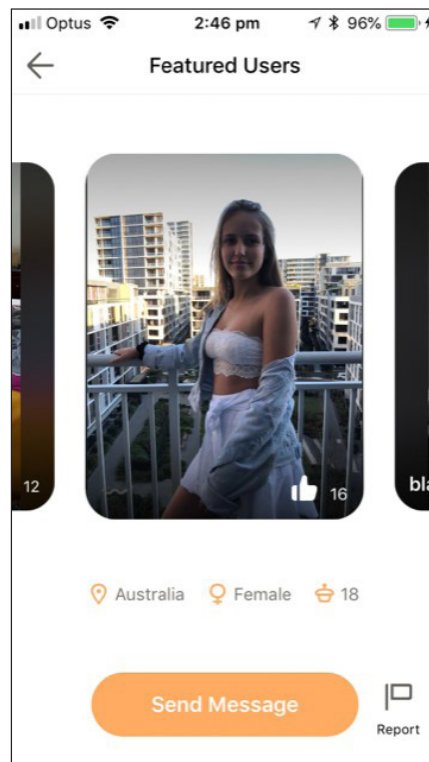
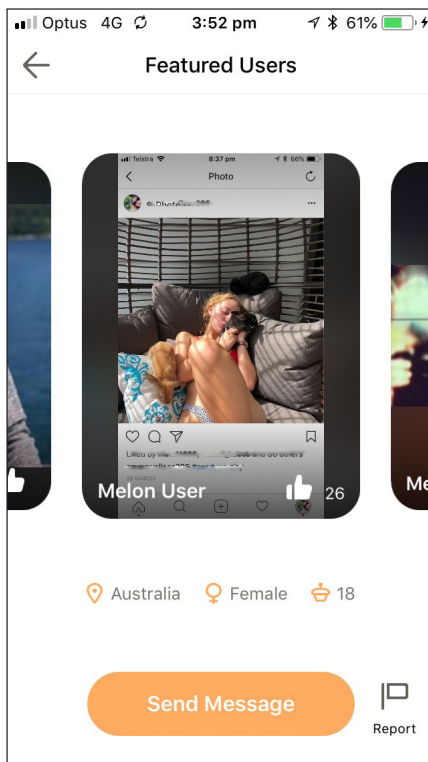
Have you heard of an app called Melon? If you haven't, you may be about to. We decided to take a look as to what it is all about after hearing about it many times lately in the High Schools we present in. Melon connects users with new people based on social media friends and offers private messaging, video chat, and a people search feature.

It's gaining popularity in Australia and being featured in articles that are calling it out for the frequency of cyberbullying and the high concentration of men looking for girls that will do whatever they ask on camera.

One of the first things we noticed when logging on to the app was people quite clearly lying about their age. Others chose to tightly control their Discord community, allowing only friends to be invited, and with strangers generally prohibited.

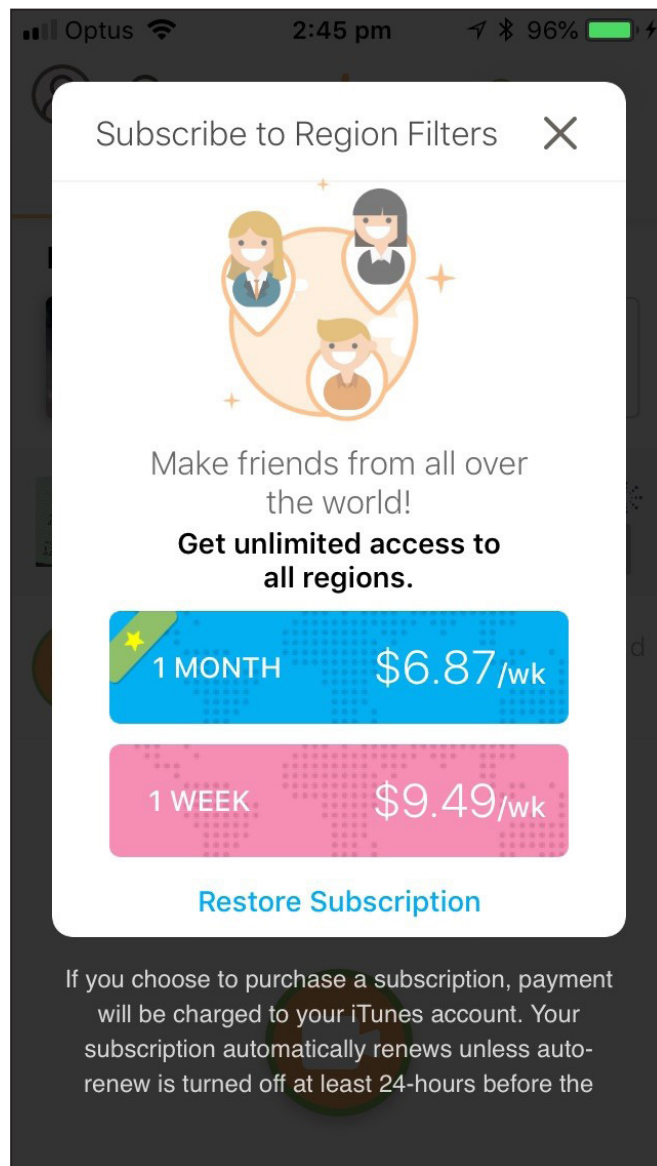


Others (particularly young women) using provocative screenshots from their Instagram accounts as profile pictures that include their Instagram username. Thus encouraging strangers to connect to users on Instagram as well.



Like online gaming and most apps now there is a social aspect where young people can be having online conversations with complete strangers as well as people that they know. As their Teachers, Parents, and Guardians we need to consider the risks so that we can continually advise young people how to mitigate those risks when using these apps as in most cases “don’t” is clearly not working.

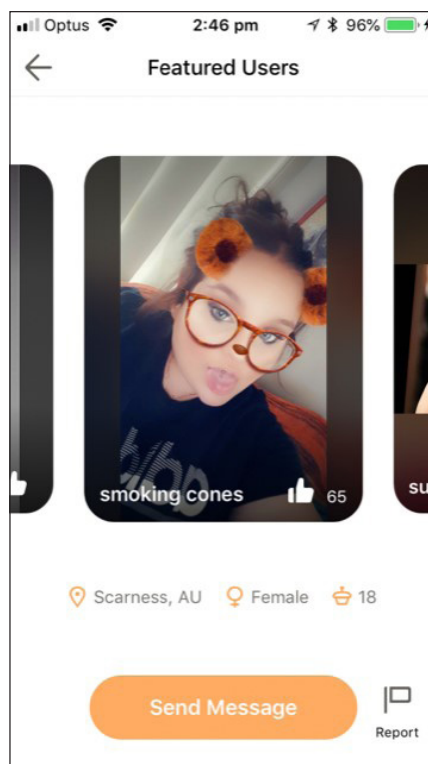
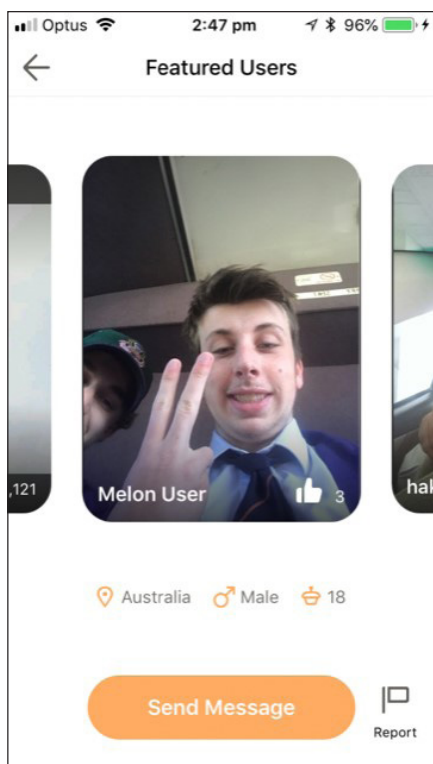
The Melon App is a video-based chat app that allows people from all over the world to connect by just tapping on their device. Users can chat with as many different individuals as they like and the app records a history of chats so you can revisit and continue to “make friends all over the world!” Some filters allow users to talk with people in selected regions. Even though the app is free to download it does start asking you to pay when you use filters.



The recommended age guideline for the app on the apple store is 17+ due to infrequent/mild sexual content and occasional nudity. However, in the Terms and conditions of the app it states "If you are under the age of 13yrs of age, you are not authorised to use the service without registering.

If a child is under the age of 18, they may use the service, with or without registering only with the approval of a parent or guardian. In addition, you should review the terms of service with them to make sure you and they understand and agree with the terms of service. The terms and conditions of use for Melon are confusing, they state verbatim....."If they are under the age of 13yrs, they have to register, but if they are under the age of 18yrs they don't have to"..... Confused? We are too. The age guideline is hard to decipher and impossible to monitor.

I registered with my correct date of birth that I am a 40 something-year-old female and the connections that were immediately presented to me were all 18yrs - 26yrs, and it was quite clear from some of the profile pics that most are not using their real age. And some are using names directly referring to recreational drug use which could become an issue on their digital footprint in the future.



By tapping the screen, you're immediately connected to someone. Melon gives users the opportunity to report another user for offensive behaviour. Any app that offers live video chats cannot block offensive or threatening language other than banning users AFTER their actions. Melon states the conversations are monitored, but since it's live, things will happen that can't be unseen or unheard.

The app is available for free for iPhones and Android devices.

1. It's clearly not an app for school student's due to its random video chat function.
2. This app should be avoided.
3. The #1 way to avoid exposure to harmful apps is to turn off the app store in Apple's restrictions.
4. Don't forget you are the parent. If you allowed your child to have a phone make sure you check the apps they are regularly using, ask questions, get your child to show you the pluses and negatives of every app they are using that you are not familiar with.
5. Set boundaries. Ban devices from the bedroom or put a curfew in place.
6. Remind children that online, "stranger danger" is 24x7 and they should never share personal information or meet up with anyone they have met online

w: safeonsocial.com
e: wecanhelp@safeonsocial.com

No part of this e-book or its associated modules may be reproduced or transmitted by any person or entity in any form by any means, electronic or otherwise including photocopying, recording or scanning or by any information storage without prior permission other than the licensor who is licensed to use this information on their website, in newsletters and in print and has been granted permission from the publisher under an annual license.

The publisher, authors, licensee, licensor and their respective employees or agents will not accept responsibility for injuries or damage, physical or emotional occasioned to any person as a result of a social media use or any other activities described in this e-book.

Whilst every attempt has been made to ensure that the information in this e-book is accurate, it is the nature of social media to be constantly changing. Therefore, Safe on Social Media Pty Ltd gives no guarantees to the completeness or accuracy of the contents of this guide.