

# Safeguarding Newsletter

17<sup>th</sup> December 2019

## Safeguarding ALERT: UNICO LIVE App

by Ineqe Safeguarding Group December 06, 2019



**UNICO LIVE is the latest app to come onto our radar, which poses significant risks to children and young people. We've put together the features, risks and what you can do to protect children and young people in your care.**

### What is UNICO LIVE?

Released in April this year, UNICO LIVE is a relatively new live-streaming app developed by a Hong Kong based company. The App features unicorn imagery, which may make it attractive to children and young people.

### Key features:

- Users can publicly live-stream themselves or share a screen with another person.
- Users can chat, share gifts (of monetary value) and subscribe to be notified of future live streams.
- Users can use stickers and filters to customise their stream.
- Viewers can send love, and share gifts of monetary value.

### What we found:

- Our team testing the app found high levels of engagement from adults instructing children to engage in sexualised activity.
- Each live stream has a message stating that streams are moderated 24hrs a day, but there was no evidence of moderation despite open and public requests for young people to remove their clothing.
- There did not appear to be any reporting function.

### The issues/concerns:

- The gifting feature on this platform gives individuals with a deviant sexual interest in children, the tools to encourage, entice and exploit vulnerable young people on the platform via these gifts.
- In one sample live stream, a child younger than ten was being asked to remove her clothing by multiple adult users while simultaneously being gifted coins.

- It appears that this app has been removed from Apple's UK store and has been brought to the attention of UK police and several safeguarding boards. At the time of publishing, it is still available on Android.

Our Advice:

- Check young people's devices for this app – and help them remove it.
- Remember even if the app is removed from app stores, it will still work on devices it's been downloaded on.
- Engage young people in a conversation – about keeping safe online and who they would talk to if someone made them feel uncomfortable online.
- Check that they only engage with other people they know online.
- Check that they understand what they should do if they see something online that upsets or worries them.

You can also submit an online report to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (CEOP) by clicking [here](#).

If you have concerns about the immediate safety of a young person, you should contact the emergency services on 999 (emergency number).