



# TWSCB Briefing on Online Apps

**OoVoo is an online App that children seem to love. If used properly it is a fun App but children need to be aware that they need to keep themselves safe.**

## Why must we know the dangers?

A 54 year old male was recently charged with “*Engaging in Sexual Activity in the presence of a Child*” by using the OoVoo video chat facility via a webcam to children he had randomly connected with. To date the investigation has revealed the following: he had created a total of 102 individual OoVoo accounts and he had a total of 9,500 unique OoVoo contacts in his address book; it has been established that he had used his accounts to contact 129 individuals. This is a good a good example of how one offender can employ a ‘**scatter gun**’ approach, targeting a large number of potential victims over a large geographical area.

**OoVoo is a video chat and messaging app.** It is available for iPhone/iPod/iPads and Androids. You can also use OoVoo on a computer (PC or MAC). With OoVoo you can video chat with up to 12 people at a time; you can see four people at once on screen during these video chats. This maybe is the feature that kids really like. OoVoo will let them have a little video chat party. OoVoo is fun – as long as kids remember privacy and safety. OoVoo has a privacy option where you can specify how and if people can find you on OoVoo. You can choose either “Anyone”, “People who know your email address or OoVoo ID”, or “Nobody”. Choose the middle option and there is less of a chance that random strangers will find you and send you messages. With this option, a friend who knows your e-mail address – presumably a friend – can find you and send you a friend request. You could also choose “Nobody” in which case, someone would have to type in your OoVoo ID directly. To find these settings, click the profile photo, click the Settings icon (“gear” icon) and then select “Privacy & Security”.

## How to use OoVoo Safely:

1. In your **profile**, use your first name only.
2. Create a **username** that doesn’t include your last name.
3. Use a **profile picture** that doesn’t give away where you live (do not to take a picture in front of your school!)
4. Same with the **profile video** (a video status messages called an “OoVie”). Don’t divulge personal information. Or, just use one of the generic videos that come with OoVoo.
5. Don’t add a **status message** (and if you do, don’t add personal information. You can note the theme here: don’t put your personal and private information in the profile!)
6. Use the **Privacy settings**.

Please look on the TWSCB Website [www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk](http://www.telfordsafeguardingboard.org.uk) and select Online Safety Icon for more online safety tips and support.