

Anonymous Apps

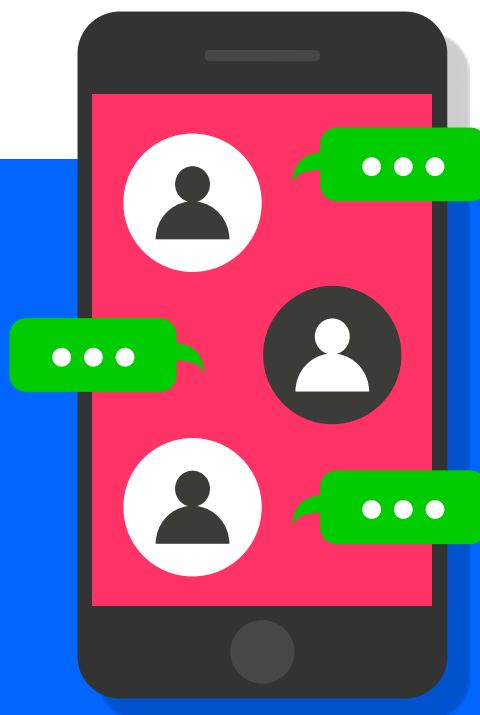
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What parents need to know >>

What are Anonymous Apps?

Anonymous apps allow users to share and interact with each other **without revealing who they are**. Unlike social media sites, many of these apps encourage users to stay anonymous and chat to each other or post questions and answers on a range of topics.

Although anything shared on these apps is anonymous, it's important to note that anonymity is not guaranteed as certain types of information like an IP address or cookies can be used to identify who you are. Also, some apps sync to a users contact list or location to provide a personalised experience on the platform.



Why are these apps popular with children?

The ability to be anonymous and **ask questions that may be sensitive or embarrassing** is one reason why millions of teens worldwide are using these apps.

Also, these apps remove the anxiety of presenting your 'best self' online and allow teens take on different personas and explore different ideas without fear of repercussions.



What risks do Anonymous apps have?

Anonymous apps can expose children to a range of online risks, including inappropriate content, cyberbullying and sexting.

Under the cover of anonymity, people may feel less accountable for what they say and may share things that they would not on open social platforms.

By the very nature of these apps, **keeping teens safe becomes that much more of a challenge**, so having regular conversations on the subject is key. Make it a habit to talk about which apps they are using and any associated watch outs.



What is the minimum age of most anonymous apps?

Most Anonymous apps range from a minimum age of 13 to 17. Whatever the minimum age, it's important to make sure to review these apps to make sure that the content on the platform is age appropriate.

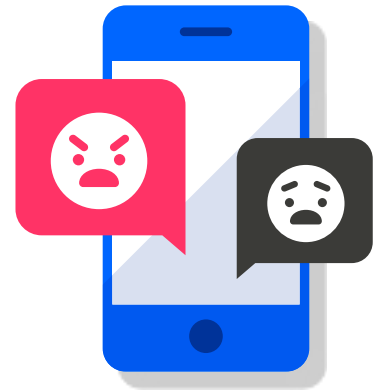
What do the experts say?

Online safety experts have raised concerns over anonymous apps that **allow users to give feedback to others as this has led to cases of cyberbullying.**

A number of these 'anonymous feedback apps' hit the headlines because of safety concerns over the need for more safety tools on the platform to keep children safe.

Are there any positives to anonymity apps?

For some teens they offer a chance to ask intimate or sensitive questions on subjects that they feel embarrassed to talk openly about. However, as the information comes from an anonymous source, it's important to be critical about what is shared.



Top tips to support children

1. Talk to them about their app usage

It's important to know what your children are doing on their devices, **so speak to your child regularly** about which apps they are using and who they are speaking to.

2. Review apps on their devices

Check age ratings of any apps you're not familiar with. It's a good idea to use app store settings to only show age appropriate apps. Also, review the privacy settings on these apps to make sure they are in control of how their information is used, who can see their account and what they share.

3. Don't be afraid to set some rules on app use

Children seek out norms to follow so it's important to sit together and set some boundaries on the types of apps they can and can't download. This will help them understand your concerns and why it is beneficial for them to use certain apps and not others.

4. Explain the risks

Help your child to **understand the impact these anonymous apps can have** on their digital wellbeing, and that what they say online to another person can have real life consequences. Ensure they are aware of community guidelines and reporting functions on the app to flag anything that upsets them.

5. Help them think before they post

Although anonymous apps may hide your identity to some extent **there are certain pieces of information that can identify you like an IP address** so it's important to advise children not to say or share something they wouldn't want to be shared publicly.

6. Be supportive

If your child is being cyberbullied then be calm and considered, listen to their concerns and offer your parental support. Don't deal with it alone, talk to friends and if necessary your child's school who will have an anti-bullying policy.

