

## What Parents and Carers Need to Know about Amino

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many apps which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, links and tips for adults.

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about AMINO

**PETS** **AGE RESTRICTION 12+** **MUSIC**

Amino is a social media platform offering a large group of subcommunities under one digital 'roof'. It was envisaged as the online version of a convention, where fans gather to celebrate a shared interest like comic books or sci-fi, for example. While many such platforms are harmless spaces for devotees of a certain TV show or video game to congregate, there are still some aspects that trusted adults should be aware of. With a focus on sharing user-generated content, the idea of Amino is for users to communicate with like-minded individuals – but even that can create plenty of hazards.

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

#### MODERATION GAPS

Amino has a 12+ classification in the App Store and a 'Teen' rating on Google Play. However, certain corners of the platform have little to no moderation in place – increasing the potential for more adult-themed content to reach young users. It's also possible to create an account without proof of age, raising the possibility of even younger children finding their way onto the platform.

#### UNSAFE CONTENT

The central concept behind Amino is for users to share content, then make and receive comments on these uploads. The level of anonymity that the platform offers (someone's true identity can be completely obscured behind their username, for instance) means that it would be extremely difficult to stop suggestive or outright predatory comments and messages being sent to young people.

#### INAPPROPRIATE IMAGES

Like most social media, Amino offers easy sharing of images. Its community guidelines state that any suggestive photos of 'under-18s' will be removed immediately, but of course this doesn't prevent inappropriate pictures being seen by a young person. Not all of Amino's communities are rigorously moderated, so there's a chance that some unsuitable images could temporarily evade detection.

#### COMICS & COSPLAY

#### MEMBERSHIP COSTS

Amino+ is a premium membership for the platform, offering a bevy of customisation options such as stickers, 'themes' to display one's avatars, and exclusive profile badges. Users can also purchase one-off cosmetic items including different styles of chat bubbles or profile frames. If your child has payment methods available via their device, they could potentially make these in-app purchases without you realising.

#### REPEATED USAGE

As a social media app, Amino is focused on keeping its communities engaged and coming back for more. Part of this approach is encouraging people to build up 'streaks', as users are awarded 'reputation points' for logging in regularly. This type of mechanism, of course, drives the risk of young people feeling a compulsion to repeatedly check in with the app, further increasing their screen time.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### TALK ABOUT IT

If your child is old enough and chooses to download and use Amino, it's probably wise to remind them of some online safety basics – such as how not everyone in the digital world is who they claim to be, for example, or not to give out personal information online. It might also be a good idea to go into the app's settings and disable incoming chat requests from users that your child doesn't know.

### STAY UPDATED

Ensure that your child knows to report any upsetting or worrying online content they might see to you. As much as possible, try to stay aware of which communities they're joining on Amino. Most of these areas are well moderated and full of innocent conversation about common interests, but on any platform of this breadth, there's always the potential for chats to veer off into potentially harmful places.

### MEMBERSHIP MEDIATION

If your child asks for an Amino+ membership but you're not entirely comfortable with that, be prepared to explain your decision in depth. Young people's sense of injustice can naturally become inflamed when their friends have things that they don't. Parents of older teens, meanwhile, might actually decide to agree to the membership request but continue to monitor their child's activity on the app.

### MONITOR SCREEN TIME

If you haven't already, you might want to consider setting up controls such as Family Sharing (on iOS devices) or Family Link (on Android) so, from your own device, you can keep an eye on how much screen time your child is having – and what apps they're spending it on. This can be extremely useful with regard to platforms such as Amino, which can be quite addictive and reward repeated use.

### Meet Our Expert

Usual Comment is a former V-Chat of gaming and esports site Dailymotion and has worked in the gaming media for around four years. A regular visitor to the App Store to try out new apps, he's also a parent who understands the value of online safety. Writing mostly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including iDroid and TechRadar.

**NOS** National Online Safety®  
#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/health-56789012>

Follow us on social media:  
@nationalonlinesafety /NationalOnlineSafety @nationalonlinesafety @national\_online\_safety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 25.05.2023

Expressing ourselves and interacting online can be fun - but only if it's safe for *everyone*

🗨️ The social networking platform Amino offers opportunities to exchange views on countless hobbies and interests ... but its lack of age verification represents an obvious risk for younger users

With inappropriate content, the possibility of messages from strangers and rewards for repeated daily usage front and centre among the potential dangers that parents and carers should know about, this week's

#WakeUpWednesday guide gives Amino the acid test.

Please [click here](#) to download the guide