



Blue Whale Challenge

What is the 'Blue Whale Challenge'?

The Blue Whale Challenge is an online suicide game aimed at teenagers. It emerged in early 2019 and now seems to have resurfaced in 2020.

It sets 50 challenges over 50 days with the tasks you have to do complete rising in seriousness each day. On the last day the challenge demands that you commit suicide and has allegedly caused deaths around the world.

The challenge is conducted through social media platforms, and there is usually an individual telling another person which tasks to do each day.

DO NOT TAKE PART

If you see any indication of the Blue Whale Challenge online we urge you not to take part or to share anything to do with it.

This is a new type of cyber-bullying and online criminal activity that encourages social media users to obey the rules of others online. People are being forced into doing very dangerous tasks that could even result in death.

Many administrators of the challenge are messaging people via social media, so please put your accounts onto private so that you don't receive such messages.

If you see anyone sharing #bluewhalechallenge or any related hashtags this could be a symbol that they are participating and may need assistance.

Our Advice

The internet is constantly changing, and new issues and online platforms are arising all the time. We would advise parents and carers to have an open and honest conversation with their children. Ask your children about what they're seeing online, talk through some of the issues that this game has brought to light, such as self-harm and negative influences online. The NSPCC has some great advice for when you need to talk about difficult topics.

It's important that your children feel that they are able to come and talk to you about any issues they may be having online. Although it may seem difficult to have this conversation, we have some conversation starters that can help you to start a discussion with your family about their time online.

Other things to consider to keep your child safe online are:

Age restrictions: Think about the age restrictions on the sites you family use. Common Sense Media and Net Aware are great sites to see what other parents think of the age rating on different platforms so that you can make an informed decision of whether your family should be using them.

Privacy setting: Most social networking sites have privacy settings to help you manage the content you share and who you share it with; you can decide if you want your posts to be shared with your online friends and followers only or with the public. You can also decide who can contact you on sites you use within the privacy settings.

Block and report: Make sure your child knows that they can block or report any user that makes them feel uncomfortable online. Childnet have some guidance on how to make reports on different websites.

If you are worried about a child:

Young Minds is a children's charity which focuses on young people's mental health <https://youngminds.org.uk>

Papyrus is the national charity for the prevention of young suicide. <https://www.papyrus-uk.org>

Other helpful links:

Our Parents' Guide to Technology gives advice about smart phones, gaming devices, tablets and other internet-connected devices. We also have a parent's guide to the parental controls offered by your home internet provider.

With our Social Media Guides you can find out more about the safety features available on these popular social networks.