

## **What is the Blue Whale online suicide game?**

The Blue Whale suicide game is believed to be a social media group, which is encouraging people to kill themselves.

The horrific tasks include self-harming, watching horror movies and waking up at unusual hours, but these gradually get more extreme.

On the 50th day, the controlling manipulators behind the game reportedly instruct the youngsters to commit suicide.

The NSPCC say children should remember not to follow the crowd and not feel pressured into doing anything that makes them feel unsafe. A spokesperson said: "Children can find it difficult to stand up to peer pressure but they must know it's perfectly okay to refuse to take part in crazes that make them feel unsafe or scared.

"Parents should talk with their children and emphasise that they can make their own choices and discuss ways of how to say no.

"Reassuring a child that they can still be accepted even if they don't go along with the crowd will help stop them doing something that could hurt them or make them uncomfortable."

**No deaths in Britain have been linked to the game, but police officers have posted online warnings to parents.**

It can sometimes be hard to stand up to your friends, so **Childline offers the following tips on how to say no:**

1) Say it with confidence:

Be assertive. It's your choice and you don't have to do something which makes you feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

2) Try not to judge them:

By respecting their choices, they should respect yours.

3) Spend time with friends who can say 'no':

It takes confidence and courage to say no to your friends. Spend time with other friends who also aren't taking part.

4) Suggest something else to do:

If you don't feel comfortable doing what your friends are doing, suggest something else to do.

**Any child worried about peer pressure or online worries can contact Childline on 0800 1111.**

***If you are affected by any of the issues raised in this article, the Samaritans can be contacted on 020 7734 2800***

## **Is Blue Whale in the UK?**

Essex Police informed a school in Basildon about the Blue Whale challenge and the head teacher wrote to parents about it.

The letter, sent by Woodlands School in Basildon, was seen by Essex Live and read: "We have discovered a game through the police that we feel you should be aware of.

"It is called The Blue Whale Game and is played via many social media platforms."

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### **NSPCC offers the following tips**

1) Create the right situation:

Make sure you both have time to talk, the atmosphere is relaxed, and remember that this is a conversation, not an interrogation.

2) Listen:

Avoid solely talking at them. Listen to their concerns and their experiences.

3) Acknowledge their worries:

Dismissing their feelings will only shut down the conversation and make them reluctant to talk about what's bothering them.

4) Help them practise ways of saying no:

Rehearsing with them ways to stand up to peer pressure and coming up with alternatives for them will build their confidence.

5) Keep the conversation going:

Let them know that they can always come to you if they have more worries, and take an interest in how they get on saying "no".

**Any adult who wants advice on how to talk to their child about peer pressure can contact the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000.**

### **What is Instagram doing to stop the game spreading?**

Instagram has started showing users a warning when they search for pictures relating to Blue Whale.

When you search for the term on the network, a notification appears which reads: "Posts with words or tags you're searching for often encourage behaviour that can cause harm and even lead to death.

"If you're going through something difficult, we'd like to help."

But directly underneath the post it gives the option to "see posts anyway".