



October 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Squid Game (Netflix) and Online Viral Scares

There has been a lot of media reports over the last couple of weeks about Netflix's 'Squid Game'. This is currently the most watched show in 90 countries and nearly all episodes of the '15' rated show contain violent and gruesome scenes.

Scary stories in the media often create a sense of alarm which can become self-fulfilling. Although it seems counter-intuitive, it is usually best not to name or discuss the frightening content in depth.

The main reasons for this are:

1. It can generate a false sense of security - by saying avoid one show, game, or online content everything will be OK, can mean that other things can be missed.
2. It can be giving free publicity and in fact, widely spread warnings can even boost traffic.
3. It can spread panic.

Further information on viral scares in general can be found at the following CEOP website:

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/theres-a-viral-scare-online-what-should-i-do/>

If you are concerned the following advice can be helpful.

- Understandably you may be distressed or angry if you hear that your child has seen, or been involved in, a viral scare/suicide challenge. It's important to stay calm, take their concerns seriously and reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Reassure them that it is not real and that it has been put online to frighten people. [BBC Own It](#) have made a video which explains this clearly for young people.
- Remind them that when they do see something upsetting or worrying that they are in control. They can report it to the platform they are using and close their app or browser.
- Talk to them about other sources of support – speaking to you will have helped, but further support from other sources could also help. There are [lots of organisations](#) out there can provide this.

As always, if you have any concerns, please contact our DSL team at staysafe@testbourne.school

Yours faithfully

Dr Hall
Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral)

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