

HANDLE WITH SCARE

WHAT IS 'HORROR'?

A style of entertainment that is designed to **shock, scare, and provoke** its audience. It can be split into various sub-genres (such as gothic, paranormal, and slasher) but the aim is almost always the same – to frighten its audience.

YOUR HAUNTED HOUSE

Horror films, television series, videogames, and social media channels are some of the most popular forms of content in the UK.



Every child has a different tolerance for horror. However, these tolerances may change as a child matures, so they may be more or less impacted by 'scary' things over time. Check-in with those in your care regularly around the things they are 'afraid' of to ensure they feel supported.

WHY IS THE HORROR GENRE SO POPULAR?

Horror has expanded over the last few years, branching into other genres (e.g. science fiction) to become more acceptable for a wider digital audience. This has led to a more diverse variety of horror that consumers can choose from, such as:

Streaming platforms like Netflix push horror shows as being the 'biggest and scariest' available.

Social media like TikTok feature trends that involve clips or recreations of scenes from the horror genre.

Video platforms like YouTube have thousands of videos of livestreamers reacting to horror games, shows, and films.

Gaming creation systems like Roblox allow users to create their own games based on characters and situations found in horror.



WHY IS IT APPEALING TO KIDS?



The thrill of danger – They can say they were brave enough to play, watch, or read the piece and survive to the end.



Community engagement – Groups of friends may interact with horror content collectively for enjoyment or for 'dares'.



A sense of urgency – The scarier the character or threat, the more satisfying it is for them to complete or 'conquer' the content.



Breaking the rules – If they feel or are told they shouldn't play or watch something scary, they will want to do it even more.



An emotional outlet – They may feel this allows them to express their emotions in a helpful way by releasing anxious energy.

As many horror characters and stories are part of pop culture, it is extremely easy to find related horror content on most online platforms – even with parental controls switched on. Some of this content can be disturbing or harmful if a child is not expecting it, or if they are more vulnerable to this genre!

If a child is worried or anxious after encountering the horror genre, they may be:

RED FLAGS



DISTRACTED from their everyday routine.



WITHDRAWN from the world around them.



UNINTERESTED in their favourite things.



TIRED during the day, even after sleeping.



EMOTIONAL in unexpected ways.



NERVOUS to be alone in certain spaces.



FEARFUL of new or normal things.

R.I.P

RISKS IN PROGRESS

- Disturbing content
- Developing new fears
- Added anxiety and stress
- Intrusive or unsettling thoughts

TOP TIPS FOR DEALING WITH THE BOGEYMAN AT HOME

- Reassure them that they are safe.** You'll protect them from anything!
- Discuss watching together.** It might help them feel less afraid.
- Be ready to talk (if they need to).** A listening ear can help calm fears!
- Keep the conversation going.** Talk about your own fears and favourites.
- Remind them who is in their corner.** A trusted adult is a friend always.
- Talk through their fears.** Ensure those tricky emotions are expressed safely.
- Acknowledge their fears.** Help them express those tricky emotions safely!

