

# 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.



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.

## YOUR HAUNTED HOUSE

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



### 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

