

Safe At Summerhill

At Summerhill School we are committed to Safeguarding our children and young people as well as promoting positive well-being for all.

This Safeguarding newsletter, aims to help staff, parents and students alike to be aware of the safeguarding and mental health issues, giving you useful links and resources to use if you have concerns. If you have concerns or ideas for future topics please do not hesitate to contact us on the main school number 01384 816165 or via email on studentssupport@summerhill.dudley.sch.uk

Half Term Activities in Dudley Borough

Children aged 16 and under who live in the Dudley borough are eligible to swim for free at Crystal Leisure Centre (Stourbridge), Duncan Edwards Leisure Centre (Dudley) and Halesowen Leisure Centre during public swimming times (see opposite for details). Free swimming will be offered during Dudley school holidays. Swimming is a great way to get children active, keep them healthy and have fun during the school holidays. To access this offer, registration must be completed prior to visiting the centres. Parents or children aged 13 or older can sign up straight away. You will then be issued with a QR code which will need to be scanned every time you visit the leisure centres. [T&Cs apply*](https://www.freeswimindudley.co.uk/home). Please see attached for more information. <https://www.freeswimindudley.co.uk/home>



International Stress Awareness Week

International Stress Awareness Week attracts media attention worldwide. The highlight is Stress Awareness Day on Wednesday 1st November 2023. Stress is "The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them." Excessive pressures may come from several different sources, and when their combined effect is overwhelming, stress occurs. This means that stress is not good for you. Stress is an unhealthy state of body or mind or both. For many years, people have referred to the Flight or Fight response as the stress response. But Flight or Fight is a one-off reaction to a perceived challenge or pressure and, as such, is a safety response, ensuring the individual is alerted to possible threats, allowing them to take avoiding action. However, continually being in this state means that the body chemicals associated with Flight or Fight are constantly being stimulated, which may create symptoms of, or cause, ill health. If you would like to read more, please follow this link - [Stress Awareness Week](#)



Who are Young Carers?

Young carers are children or young adults up to the age of 18, who help care for another person. This may be someone in their family, i.e. a parent, grandparent, sibling or other relative, who needs looking after because they have a physical disability, a mental health condition, a learning disability, a drug or alcohol related illness, a sensory impairment or any long-term illness or condition. Young carers can be from any background. Its not always easy and often taking on these extra responsibilities can affect their friendships and relationships, learning and development, health and wellbeing or future career choice. Some difficulties they may face are worrying about the person they care for, increased levels of stress and anxiety, feeling that there is no one to talk to who understands and they can face many more difficulties. So how can we help? Caring for someone can be very isolating, worrying and stressful. If you think of yourself as a carer, you should not have to do so much caring that it makes you upset, unwell or miss school or further education. It is important to know that there is help and support available to you. Following a Carers Assessment, the Dudley Young Carers (DYC) team can provide information and advice, one to one support with a dedicated worker, support with much more support available. Please see this link to read more [Young Carers](#)



Mrs Sprouting
Designated
Safeguarding
Lead



Mr Randle
Deputy
Safeguarding
Lead



Ms Gordon
Deputy
Safeguarding
Lead



Mr Quirke
Deputy
Safeguarding
Lead



Mr Cresswell
Deputy
Safeguarding
Lead

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

FIVE NIGHTS AT FREDDY'S



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Five Nights at Freddy's is a series of indie point-and-click horror games whose word-of-mouth success and widespread spin-off content on YouTube have helped each of the nine instalments so far to sell almost five million copies on Steam (the PC gaming platform) alone. Set in various deserted locations at night, with creepy animatronic characters suddenly coming to life, the games are rated PEGI 12 for disturbing/violent content, mild profanity and horror themes.

FRIGHTENING THEMES

Five Nights at Freddy's (FNaF for short) doesn't feature bloodshed like many horror games – but it does build tension and use jump scares, which may be too intense for young players. The sinister animatronic characters and the sensation of being trapped and defenceless could be particularly unsettling, as could the inclusion of disturbing elements such as murder or possession by evil spirits.

STRESSFUL SITUATIONS

Due to FNaF's suspenseful atmosphere, it can be extremely stressful for players. Constantly checking that one's surroundings are safe is a crucial part of the gameplay and could create residual stress or even obsessive-compulsive behaviours. Several media reports have suggested that some younger children have experienced severe nightmares or sleep anxiety after playing games from the series.

IN-GAME SPENDING

FNaF doesn't foreground in-game purchasing as strongly as many other well-known games, but some titles in the series do offer additional content that promises to enhance the experience. Five Nights at Freddy's: Help Wanted, for instance, is complemented by a Halloween-themed expansion pack called 'Curse of Dreadbear' (costing £8.99), which unlocks new levels and mini-games.

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

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As a result of FNaF's popularity, a sizeable YouTube community based on fan-made content has developed around the game. While the majority of this material is still child friendly, there are a number of channels which are geared more towards mature audiences; they contain adult and disturbing themes, for example, and (in some cases) age-inappropriate language.

PLAYING IN ISOLATION

Many parents will be relieved to learn that Five Nights at Freddy's is a single-player game which doesn't include any online chat functionality. Conversely, however, this could also make playing FNaF quite an isolating experience – especially if your child is spending a lot of time investigating the game's spooky, shadowy environments alone in their room, for example.

Advice for Parents & Carers

USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Five Nights at Freddy's doesn't have conventional parental controls. However, if you're concerned about the potential impacts of the game's themes and content, you can simply choose not to let your child play it. If they use an Android or iOS device for gaming, you can adjust Apple and Google's built-in parental controls to restrict your child's access to certain content.

TRY IT YOURSELF

Every child is different, of course, so it could be worth playing Five Nights at Freddy's yourself for a while to gauge how your young gamer might cope with the series' more frightening and disturbing aspects. If they're old enough, you could spend some time playing it together – after all, it usually only takes between two and ten minutes to complete a level.

LIMIT SPENDING

Unlike many popular titles, Five Nights at Freddy's doesn't bombard players with tempting in-game purchase offers. It's worth noting, however, that some instalments in the series do provide the option for players to spend real-world money. With that in mind, it's important to either keep a close eye on your child's expenditure or limit their access to digital payment options.

SPOT THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that your child might be spending too much time on Five Nights at Freddy's, or you're worried that the game's scary themes are taking a toll, watch out for warning signs. Young people may start to prioritise gaming over everyday essentials like schoolwork or sleep; irritability or a lack of concentration could also indicate that their gaming sessions are going on too long.

TALK ABOUT THE RISKS

Before you allow your child to play Five Nights at Freddy's, it's wise to have a conversation about the game so that they're aware of the potential risks. Ensure that your child understands that the series is purposely designed to be tense and unsettling, and that they should stop or take a break if the intensity of the gameplay is making them feel uncomfortable or putting them on edge.

Meet Our Expert

Carly Page is an experienced technology journalist with a track record of more than 10 years in the industry. Previously the editor of tech tabloid The Inquirer, Carly is now a freelance technology journalist, editor and consultant.

