

Games can be replayed; not life – Bury the Blue Whale



Advisory

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What is the Blue Whale Game?

The Blue Whale Game is an internet-enabled game. Potential candidates post their willingness to play the game through various online channels, monitored by the game administrators. It does not require any dedicated websites, applications or mobile applications to participate in this game. It consists of a series of tasks assigned to players / participants by administrators during a 50-day period. The final challenge requires the participants to commit suicide.

What is the purpose of the game?

The game is claimed to be invented by a former psychology student. The inventor stated that his purpose was to “clean” the society by pushing to suicide those he deemed as having no value.

Parents and society need to come together and introspect into the lives of young minds to make them mentally stronger

What kind of tasks are assigned as part of this game?

The tasks assigned, by the administrator, during the 50-day period, could range from seemingly benign activities such as listening to music, waking up at odd hours, etc. to dangerous ones such as self-harming, watching videos sent by the administrator, poking a needle to the arm or leg, carving a specific phrase on the person’s own hand or arm, etc. The last task of the game is to get the participant to COMMIT SUICIDE.

Who are the target participants of this game?

The game is primarily targeting teenagers who are already suffering from suicidal tendencies. Through its various challenges, the game brainwashes them to inflict self-harm and take their life.

How do the administrators reach out to potential participants?

Potential participants acquire the knowledge about the game from various sources such as newspapers, media articles, friends, social media, etc. Further information could be gained via looking up the game on any of the search engines. A willing participant can reach out to the administrators by leaving their contact details on associated forums, social media pages or on websites directly related to this game. They can use certain hashtags in their social media posts. The administrators select those candidates who would be exposed to psychological pressure.

Is the game limited to any specific country?

Though the game is claimed to have originated in Russia but overtime it has spread to other countries as well. It is being reported that the game has claimed 137 lives so far. Suicide cases have been reported in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Georgia, India, Italy, Kenya, Paraguay, Portugal, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Spain, United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Recently, a 14-year old Indian boy was reported to commit suicide while playing this game. However, we need to await investigation and final report on the case.

How can parents prevent their children from participating in this game?

At the moment, parents are required to be more vigilant and observant towards the behaviour of their children. As mentioned above, the primary target audience for this game are teenagers who are depressed and suffering from suicidal tendencies. Parents need to be more observant towards the

behaviour of their children and talk to them about it. Here are few ways, for parents, to initiate a discussion with their children:

- 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.
- Listen: Avoid solely preaching them. Listen to their concerns and their experiences.
- Acknowledge their worries: Dismissing their feelings will only shut down the conversation and make them reluctant to talk about what's bothering them.
- Help them practice 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.
- 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".

Apart from these, few monitoring tips include:

- Be vigilant about your child's online activity
- Monitor browsing history, apps and conversations on mobile phones.
- Use parental control feature, of anti-virus software, to block unwanted websites.
- Ensure that the child's school has implemented appropriate measures to prevent exposure to unwanted things.

What to do if you find your child is participating in this game?

- First of all, DO NOT PANIC and under no circumstances take it out on your child. A child participating in this game is already under significant trauma and mishandling the situation would only worsen it.
- Talk to your child in a calm and patient manner, as mentioned above.
- Acknowledge the fact that they need help of a professional psychologist and that it is the parents' responsibility to ensure they get that help.
- Inform the law enforcement agencies as soon as possible.

What are the steps being taken by the government and law enforcement agencies to curb the growth of this game?

Both the government and law enforcement agencies are focused to tackle the menace and danger posed by this game.

We have also recommend the Government of India, through Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology and Ministry of Women & Child Development, to consider the following:

Ministry of Electronics & IT :

- Engage with social media service providers to identify any such groups that violate their usage policy.
- Appeal to the internet users to refrain from forwarding/discussing about any such viral messages originated without credible source.

Women and Child Development:

- Take help of MHA to check if there are any reports linked with this game.

- Issue advisories to parents to check if their kids are behaving strangely and participating in Blue Whale or similar forums.
- Issue advisories to schools & colleges for restricting/regulating the usage of social media and also issue warnings to the teachers and system administrators regarding such news reports.
- Department of Women and Children may open phone lines/portal to receive information regarding existence of such closed groups, information regarding somebody participating in such games, etc.
- Based on the information received, the Ministry of IT can work closely with the service providers to remove/block it and also identify the origin.

Let's come together and bury this game before it claims another precious young life.

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