FOUR and a HALF FRIENDS

26 x 26'



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BASED ON THE BESTSELLING BOOKS BY JOACHIM FRIEDRICH

ZDF STUDIOS



FOUR and a HALF FRIENDS

26 x 26'

JOIN CHARLY & CO. DETECTIVE AGENCY!

PROGRAM INFO

Charly and his friends love solving mysteries while facing the challenges of growing up. This unlikely group of junior detectives – and their dog - will stop at nothing to find and solve cases they uncover in and around their hometown. And between the excitement, action and laughs, they'll find out a bit about themselves and each other along the way.

They don't have superpowers, they aren't geniuses and they don't even look like TV stars, but these normal, unexceptional kids and their funny-looking dog achieve amazing things when they get together as the Charly & Co. Detective Agency.

USPs

- **A modern, fast-moving spin on the traditional detective genre.**
- **Narrated from the point of view of each main character – including the dog!**
- **A series of detective stories based on bestselling books published in more than 20 countries.**

KEY FACTS

- **Animation Series: 26x26'**
- **Comedy Detective Adventure**
- **boys and girls 6–10**

KEY WORDS

detective, investigation, mystery, adventure, comedy, friendship, teamwork



MODERN, FAST-MOVING SPIN ON THE TRADITIONAL DETECTIVE GENRE. KEEPS YOU GUESSING UNTIL THE END.



ABOUT THE SHOW

“Four and a Half Friends” is about the detective adventures of Charly, Stefy, Radish and Fred and their special friend – a small, mangy street dog called Dandy. They love having fun and being together, but most of all they love solving mysteries.

This show puts a modern, fast-moving spin on the traditional detective genre. Told through the eyes of one of the characters – including Dandy – these stories are funny and touching, and give viewers a unique look into our characters’ inner thoughts and feelings.

They may look like an ordinary bunch, but don’t be fooled. Working together as the Charly & Co. Detective Agency these 4½ Friends will stop at nothing to find a case, and do whatever it takes to solve it!

Being kids, they have a wide-eyed, impressionable view of the world, but this often gives them an advantage, especially when they face grown-ups who are up to no good. Of course, as kids they also have to handle the problems of growing up, but being in a Detective Agency helps them deal with this too.

Okay, so they might not always start off on the right track, but somehow their investigations always lead them into tense, exciting situations that combine laughs with suspense, and keep you guessing until the end - when it all works out, more or less!

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THESE FRIENDS IS A KEY STRENGTH.

MEET THE FRIENDS

They don't have superpowers, they aren't geniuses and they don't even look like TV stars, but these normal, unexceptional kids and their funny-looking dog achieve amazing things when they get together as the Charly & Co. Detective Agency.

One of the unique things about this show is that we live each adventure through the eyes of a character. This 'kid's-eye view' means viewers will be able to identify with the character's thoughts and feelings, and enjoy their adventures even more.

Of course, with this privileged view of their inner thoughts and feelings, we also get to see the insecurities and worries each character has to face every day as a kid growing up... and to share their sense of humour too.

Whoever's telling the story, we always get to share the friends' fondness for each other, for solving mysteries and for finding adventures! The relationship between this group of friends is a key strength in the show.







CHARLY

Charly is founder and leader of Charly & Co. Detective Agency, and the driving force behind everything the group of friends gets up to. He sweeps the others along with his boundless enthusiasm and dedication to being the best detective ever.

A huge fan of every TV detective show, true-life crime report and forensically detailed book ever written on the subject, Charly is a dedicated student of all things criminal. In fact, such is his dedication that he lives his entire life for investigating, and sees the world through the prism of his detective skills. This is true to such an extent that it is fair to say he is delusional.



He's intelligent, second in class (behind Stefy), and has an analytical mind like a smooth, well-oiled machine, but is so focused on all things detective that the real world often gets left behind. Charly is not emotional. Like a younger version of the latest TV Sherlock Holmes, he is all about the process and the puzzle. He thinks, considers, analyses clues and weighs up the implications. His passion for detecting means he misses the important emotional subtleties of life. Fortunately, the others handle the emotions, leaving Charly to do what he is best at.

This is a stubborn, brave and relentlessly optimistic teenager. Failure does not daunt him, because like any privileged young man who has good looks, skills at sport and intelligence on his side, he has never dealt with such an alien concept.







STEFY

Stefy is a smart, straight-talking girl who has a very clear understanding of the real world and everyone in it. She is top of the class, intelligent and funny. She is highly skilled at computing and an expert in forensic operations for the Agency.

She loves to make fun of people and find the humour in situations, but she is never mean or hurtful. She is a sensible voice in all the madness that tends to surround Charly, but she is not immune to being swept up in the excitement herself. She is fiercely loyal to her friends.



Stefy is brilliant at looking at a situation and assessing what is happening. Unlike Charly, she has a broad-based, objective view of the world with a clear understanding of the emotions in play. She listens, watches and understands people, and this gives her the knowledge and understanding to be a fast talker and get her way. She did not learn these skills like Charly did his – this is all natural talent.

Of course, Stefy is not perfect: she does have one area of weakness. Like any normal 14-year-old girl, she is not immune to the charms of cute boys. In fact, despite her natural ability to make sharp psychological assessments of others and act accordingly, her rational brain seems to take a break whenever she faces a good-looking young man. She knows this is one of the problems with being 14, but she feels bad when she is caught showing weakness!







RADISH

His real name is Oscar. He is Stefy's twin brother, but nobody would guess it. He may be the same age, but he is smaller and lacks his sister's self-confidence. In fact, it is fair to say that Radish is a worrier, the shiest of the group. He sort of hunches into his clothes so as not to be noticed, hides under the brim of his baseball cap and is almost swallowed up by his backpack full of equipment.

The only way he can bring himself to take part in their adventures is being prepared - always. This goes far beyond any boy-scout motto. Radish believes in serious preparation. He never sets foot in any situation without taking everything he needs along, plus more, just in case something happens!



However, he is not crazy or paranoid – just sensible. He has his feet on the ground. He is a thinker, not a talker. He defuses conflicts.

Out of necessity, Radish has developed a wide range of practical skills, knowledge and creativity. This makes him an ace at getting things to work, fixing things and understanding the way the world functions. He is also very good at adapting normal items for unconventional uses. He is really good at inventing gadgets.

Radish is much more interested in being part of the group than of being a detective. His skills at detecting are really a side effect of his need to plan for any event, and his ability to look, listen and understand situations. His behaviour is much more about joining in and feeling part of a team, and he is a follower, not a leader.







FRED

Fred is a happy, lovable boy who is delighted to be part of a group of friends. The fact that they are a detective agency and have adventures is a bonus! Fred lives for the social side of being in the Agency, but is nevertheless a fully committed member who will do anything to help solve a case.

The excitement of the Agency contrasts with his real life. His dad left and and he now lives in a tiny apartment with his mum in a poor area of the city. He has less than other kids so he appreciates things better.

Fred is not a sportsman; he's naturally big and strong. Emotionally intelligent and with strong instincts and intuition, Fred does not do well with schoolwork. He has no strong urge to be a leader; instead, he is happy to be led. Unlike Radish, this is a choice. He is a devoted soldier who will follow instructions, but only because he trusts his friends.



Fred's primary role is as 'canine expert' and Fred is very happy with this. He loves Dandy. The two of them have an emotional link on a simple, basic level. This connection gives the Agency a unique weapon with which to fight crimes and solve cases.

Fred is simple and lovable, and a dreamer too. This is best illustrated by his undying love for Ms. Stratford his biology teacher. She is Fred's one big weakness. If she is around, he is more likely to be off dreaming of a romantic dinner for two on a desert island than solving a case. And this can cause problems if she appears at a particularly important part of the investigation... as a potential criminal.





DANDY



Dandy is a male, grown-up dog, a product of mixed breeding and a tough life on the streets. He's small and a bit scruffy, but much more appealing than he was when he found Fred. He looks much more well-groomed now, but retains the scars of life on the streets that could not be fixed – a few missing teeth and a ragged ear that is presumably the result of a fight.

Charly says he is only half a detective as he does not consider their canine colleague to be worthy of full membership until he shows his skills. But that's just because Charly doesn't understand Dandy. He thinks this is a lazy dog that refuses to train properly. Even a bit stupid. The reality is quite different! Dandy is every bit as intelligent as any human is, and in his own mind a lot more so. In fact, he is doing the humans a favour by letting them be a part of his life. He is an adult dog, so brings a slightly different perspective to the group.



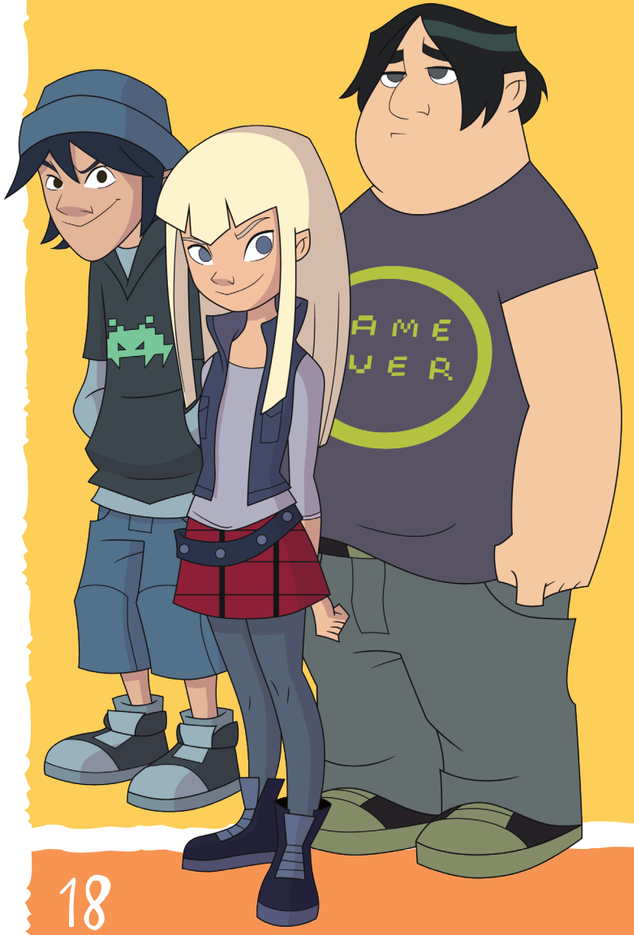
Nobody owns Dandy and nobody controls him. He is free to come and go as he wishes, and if he does not obey an order or a command it's not because he doesn't understand, it's because he doesn't want to do it. This makes it entertaining when Charly accuses Dandy of being a terrible police dog.

Dandy is a noble friend and an excellent member of the Agency. His street skills and contacts are often a great help in investigations. But he is at heart a rogue, an independent grown-up dog with a great sense of humor and a clear understanding that humans are crazy.

He will help out Fred and the group whenever he can, but does not do it for approval, and frequently holds back because he doesn't want to make it too easy for the kids. In fact, he enjoys keeping them all – especially Charly – guessing about what he's really like, what he really knows and what he's really capable of.



THE CYBERCREW



The CyberCrew are a bunch of gamer kids in the same class as Charly & Co. They see themselves as rivals, but cooler and more awesomely dressed. And they use wicked nicknames. But they are funny and inept, troublesome and annoying.

Flossy is their leader. She is a bright girl, acts like a Bond Villain and talks as if she is issuing threats, even when she is being nice.

Cheater is a nervous, frenetic boy who speaks really quickly. His face is always glued to a handheld gaming device.

Button Masher is big, strong and clumsy. He communicates via an Orc Warrior soundboard toy he carries – it produces grunts, war cries or phrases like 'Yes, master', or 'I'll crush your bones!'



HANDSOME HARRY

THE MATHS TEACHER

Every school has one – a teacher who thinks he's the cleverest person around. For Handsome Harry, this is just the start! This maths teacher loves himself more than anything else in the world, and he's convinced that everyone else feels the same way.

He wears the coolest clothes (maybe they were cool 20 years ago!) and spends at least an hour a day sculpting his moustache and beard and getting his hair into the perfect position.

He's convinced all the lady teachers – especially Mrs. Stratford – are desperate to spend time with him, but it's funny, because when you hear his Cuban heels approaching all you can see is all the ladies running in the other direction.



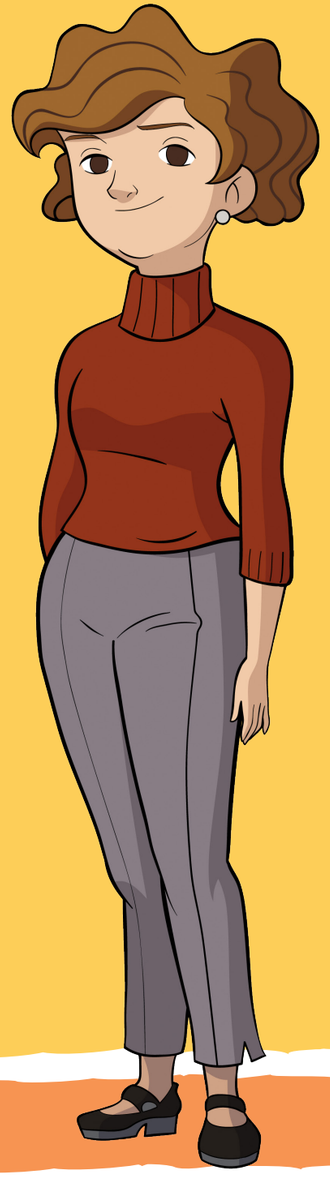
MRS. STRATFORD

THE BIOLOGY TEACHER

Unlike Handsome Harry, Mrs. Stratford is a good person and a great teacher. She understands the kids, helps them to learn and is always looking out for them. But don't think she's a soft touch. Mrs. Stratford is a very tough lady, and she won't take any nonsense.

Fred is her number one fan. She's young, tall, pretty (if a bit geeky), formidable and unattainable, and he's head-over-heels in love with her.

Mrs. Stratford loves the great outdoors, so she's happy to organise school trips to exciting places, and because of this she quite often plays a part in Charly & Co.'s investigations.



FRED'S MUM

A tough lady who's had a tough time, Fred's Mum is determined to give her only son the best life she can, even though her husband has left them.

Fred's Mum could easily be mistaken for a lady who's tied to the house, but there's a lot more to her than that. She works hard because she has to, and doesn't get much spare time or money to spend on herself.

Much to Fred's surprise, his Mum also seems to know an awful lot about things. She sometimes provides information that might occasionally help out with cases.

MR. SIGGI



THE HEADMASTER

Mr. Siggi cares more about rules, details and efficiency than anything else in the world.

He's very tall and very fat. He's always working through his spreadsheets, reports and budgets.

His lack of understanding of human emotions means that Mr. Siggi is as likely to have a chat with an 8-year-old about the latest annual educational budget as he is to tell an English teacher how to spell "cat", then try and give them a detention!



NICOLE

CHARLY'S SISTER

As an 18-year-old, Nicole is at that age where she thinks she's a grown-up who knows everything. Like Charly, she's confident, athletic, and finds it easy to make friends.

Their parents have plenty of money, so Nicole has a car, a generous allowance and the freedom to follow the latest fashions.

Although she sometimes says horrible things to Charly, she tends to do nice things soon after to make up for it. Whenever things get a bit sticky and Charly needs her help, she can't help it – she always ends up helping out, even though she complains.

FLITZ AND BONGO

DANDY'S FRIENDS

This strangely appealing duo are Dandy's friends from the old days, and (when he can find them) they act as his eyes and ears on the street.

FLITZ

Flitz is always on the move. He's a runner, an expert pickpocket and a coward. He talks almost as fast as he moves and thinks he knows everything. Flitz loves life on the street and will do anything for his friends (apart from fighting).



BONGO

Bongo is slow, stealthy and prefers the dark, or dark places. He's little but don't be fooled. He's brave, strong, can handle any situation, is packed with muscle and has never lost a fight. A master of hiding, standing stock still and blending into scenery, so he never misses a thing. No wonder with those eyes!



THERE ARE LOTS MORE VILLAINS

From genuine bank robbers on the run to shady council officials, from their favourite teacher to a mysterious ghostly figure, nobody is above investigation by Charly & Co.

The villains are the other stars of the show, because without them Charly & Co. would have nobody to track down, follow and generally investigate.

With their unique children's perspective, the kids can see things that normal detectives miss, and they can get into places that adults might not be able to. The result? Nobody is safe from their investigations – however innocent they might seem!



AND A FEW MORE TEACHERS

School is a focal point for the kids, and the teachers are never far from the action, whether they are helping with an exotic field trip, or being investigated as a bank robber!

School is a very familiar setting, and anchors the show in reality. However, once the investigations begin, the kids' imaginations play a big part in taking the stories into some much more interesting places!

FAMILY PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE

These are normal kids, from a normal cross-section of family life. From single child Fred, whose Dad has left him and his ever-loving Mum to make the best of life on their own, to Charly, who wants for nothing, but whose parents (and sister) hardly show him attention, this is family life that viewers will find, well, familiar.

The parents and other relatives play a part in the stories, but once the kids wave them good-bye and get together they make the most of their freedom. Of course, at the end of the day they end up back in the safety of their homes, but only after they've spent the episode finding out about life for themselves.

The families provide an interesting commentary on the kids' different circumstances, and how we see ourselves and our friends see us. For example, Fred spends a whole episode trying to prevent his friends from seeing his 'embarrassing' home situation, but is surprised at the end of the day to find that they really like where he lives - and his Mum!

A SUPPORTING CAST TO SUPPORT EVERY CASE

Like any good detective show, the cast of characters does all it can to confuse and complicate things. As Charly will tell you, just because someone looks innocent, it doesn't mean he isn't a master criminal, and just because someone is your biology teacher, it doesn't mean she isn't a bank robber who likes wearing disguises!

Can you trust a strange gardener at a medieval castle? A council executive with a taste for cucumbers? A dog called Fluppi with a diamond collar? A photographer with a penchant for paintings? It's up to Charly & Co. to sort out the good from the bad, and bring them to justice!





SETTINGS

AS FRESH AND ENTERTAINING AND DIVERSE AS THE CASES.

Like any normal kids, their homes and school are key settings in their lives. But from their own back yards and familiar school corridors to forests, forts and isolated islands, Charly & Co. leap into action and follow cases wherever they lead. Crime has no limits, so why should the kids hold back when it comes to following suspects and solving cases?

This can often mean working together to find their way through a forest to a deserted log cabin, or across an island in the dark on the trail of a mysterious amber thief, or even making a human pyramid to look through a café window.



















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ABOUT THE BOOKS AND THE AUTHOR

“Four and a Half Friends” is based on the internationally successful series of books written by Joachim Friedrich. A Doctor of Economics and ex-Professor of Business Administration, Friedrich has seen his books translated into more than 20 languages, and more than 20 million copies have been sold in territories including Germany, Spain, China, Japan and USA.

The continued success of the books shows the enduring quality, strength and appeal of the friends, whose fundamental characteristics and relationships are familiar to children all over the world.





SAMPLE EPISODES

THE ADVENTURES OF CHARLY & CO.





The Case of the Mystery of the Wig (Fred's point of view)

When Ms. Stratford, the bio teacher, turns up in a convertible sports car, starts acting suspiciously and is seen wearing a disguise just like some bank robbers who are on the run, Charly suspects she might be the leader of a bank robbers' gang. Trouble is, Fred's got a crush on her, so he's torn between his loyalty to his friends, and to the love of his life! Charly & Co. use their best detecting skills to solve the mystery. Although truth is very different, they manage to stop the robbers!



The Case of the Missing TV Star (Dandy's point of view)

Dandy gets the part in a dog food ad, but on the first day of filming his co-star Fluppi – a pug with a diamond collar – disappears! Madeleine, the Countess' female dog, who just happens to be Dandy's old girlfriend, replaces Fluppi in the ad. Mr. Rubenacker, Fluppi's owner, receives an anonymous note asking for a rescue and Charly offers him his detective services. The kids start investigating to no avail, but Dandy will discover the truth – which is at same time painfull and romantic.



The Case of the Tricked Grandpa
(Radish's point of view)

Radish and Stefy's father punished them by forcing them to stay home and study maths. However, they skip the punishment to help their Grandpa, as someone has tricked him and run away with his money. It turns out to be a school friend of their parents, Mr. Lehman. The investigation led by Charly & Co. involves Fred's Mum as an undercover agent to trick on Lehman! However, the smokescreen does not work and they find themselves interfering in previous police investigations.



The Case of the Lonely Panthers
(Charly's point of view)

Handsome Harry is acting weird. He's dressed like a biker, is driving a Harley motorcycle – which doesn't suit him at all – and appears with beautiful 20-year-old Laura whom he met on a social network dating site. Charly is suspicious – she's too nice for Handsome Harry – and Stefy becomes jealous. Nicole reveals Laura is a biker chick and works as a waitress in Lonely Panthers' Club. When someone steals Handsome Harry's motorbike, Charly & Co. investigate her at the Club.



The Case of the Trendy Tracksuit
(Stefy's point of view)

The kids go to the flea market where Charly thinks that people sell stolen clothes. Once there they meet Mr. Brassert, a dog trainer in a canine training suit, and sign Dandy up for a weekend course and teach him protection maneuvers. Charly's older sister Nicole, who's becoming good friends with Stefy, will join the detective agency – to Charly's disgust! But when Nicole is kidnapped by a gansters' group, Charly & Co. join forces with Miki, Nicole's boyfriend, to save her.



The Strange Case of Daniel the Janitor
(Fred's point of view)

Ms. Stratford's silver bracelet disappears in the school gym's women dressing room. The kids offer her the detective services of Charly & Co.! Fred suspects Daniel the Janitor, who looks like he has a second, evil personality. Fred is jealous of him! Finally the investigation leads to Daniel's home, and once there the kids discover this is all about a lonely old woman and lots of cats. In addition, Fred will have an opportunity to improve his relationship with his mother.



The Case of the Sulking Gnomes
(Dandy's point of view)

Fred's Mum takes in an old man who has just arrived at town – and his dog. Dandy follows them around and notices their strange behavior around Charly's house. It is not easy, but Dandy eventually manages to attract the attention of Fred and the gang and he finds out that the man photographs antiques and steals them to order. However, he reckoned without Dandy's detective skills! The gnomes leaning in the Agency's garden will be useful for the dog's investigation.



The Case of the Tasteful Art
(Stefy's point of view)

A new pupil, Ben, arrives at the school and becomes good friends with Stefy. Charly is jealous and suspects him. Carl Witt, Ben's father, is accused of stealing some sculptures and the gang tries to prove his innocence – except for Charly, who's convinced Carl is guilty. Ben helps in the investigation, which leads the kids to Tartiflette Art Gallery. Once they solve the case, Carl decides to move again to another city. Stefy is upset, as she will not see Ben anymore.



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