**Separating fact from fiction on the Momo Challenge**

Some students have recently been talking about Momo, an internet trend that has them concerned about their own internet use at home and school. When students have expressed concern or worry about this, staff have responded by discussing the importance of exercising caution, using trusted websites and having adult supervision when using the internet. The information about the Momo Challenge below is from adapted from an article found on CTV’s website. Also included are tips and links to help parents talk to their children about internet safety.

**What is the Momo Challenge?**

Descriptions of the Momo Challenge don’t always match up with each other, but there are some common themes. Reports generally involve messages being spliced into otherwise innocuous videos or delivered by human-controlled characters in online games. These messages typically urge children to contact somebody known as Momo via a social media service such as WhatsApp or Snapchat.

Once contacted, Momo is said to direct people to commit criminal acts or harm themselves – sometimes even providing instructions for suicide – and threaten harm to a user or their family if the directions are not followed.

**How can I keep my kids safe?**

Some of the police responses to the Momo Challenge have included advice on how to protect children, stressing that the methods that work for avoiding Momo are also good online safety tips in general.

* Watch what children are accessing online
* Stress that they should report anything that makes them scared or uncomfortable to a trusted adult
* Remind children never to give out personal information to a stranger

The RCMP maintains [an online portal](http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/cycp-cpcj/is-si/isres-ressi-eng.htm) of resources around child internet safety, including links to interactive learning tools geared toward children (link included in information below).

Source: <https://www.ctvnews.ca/sci-tech/separating-fact-from-fiction-on-the-momo-challenge-1.4316909>

Warning: contains frightening images

**Other Resources**

RCMP Internet Safety

<http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/cycp-cpcj/is-si/isres-ressi-eng.htm>

What Can Parents Do?

Source: <https://protectkidsonline.ca/app/en/interests_and_risks-5_to_7>

Suggestions for parents ages 5-7

* Preview any videos your child wants to watch before letting your child watch them to ensure they are age-appropriate.
* Assist your child in searching for videos they are interested in. A parent or safe adult should always supervise the online activities of children this age.
* Set limits on the amount of time your child spends watching videos, and make sure you enforce them.
* Model appropriate use of video-sharing sites, making sure not to record or send pictures without consent.

Tips for monitoring online activity and promoting online safety:

Source: <https://protectkidsonline.ca/app/en/info_monitoring_online_activities>

* **Regularly engage in conversation with your teen about the apps or sites they are using.** Remain informed about the online spaces where youth may be negatively impacted and have ongoing discussions. Review any parental controls, chat options, profile information options and privacy settings available for the apps/sites they are using.
* **Discuss the importance of seeking help.** Identify situations when it would be important to tell you, or another safe adult, about an uncomfortable or potentially unsafe situation. Acknowledge that while this may be a difficult step for your child to take, their safety is your number one priority and you are there to help them. Discuss what might happen if they don’t seek help from a safe adult and emphasize that it is never too late to come to you for help, even if they have made a mistake.