



27th February 2019

Re: The MOMO challenge – Real or an online hoax?

Dear parents/carers,

It has come to my attention, from a number of our schools across the Partnership Trust, that the 'MOMO challenge' has resurfaced once again. It is dubbed the 'suicide killer game' and is linked to a number of social media platforms including; Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube and even YouTube Kids! It is essentially **a game where children are tricked, by a scary doll-like figure, into challenges and performing increasingly violent acts including self-harm.**

MOMO is essentially a hoax, but it is so nasty that it has become sensationalised by the media and parents/carers are understandably worried. It is attracting such attention across the country that the hoax just keeps 'running and running' in a never-ending spiral.

It is only natural that some children maybe be frightened and distressed by what they see, yet this hoax is spreading so far and wide, due to the sensationalism surrounding it, that more and more children are unfortunately exposed to the MOMO challenge.

My advice to parents/carers, to provide you with confidence and reassurance, is to;

- talk to your child and remind them that it is a hoax and that MOMO is NOT real and CAN'T hurt them. REMEMBER: not everything online is true!
- tell your child to not actively search for the MOMO challenge
- be present while your child is online
- monitor your child's online activity
- make sure the parental controls, on all your devices, are set up - this will restrict the types of content your child will be able to access

Up to date advice and guidance for parents/carers can be found on your child's own school website (e-safety section) and also additional advice titled 'Top Tips for Parents' has been posted on your child's school website today.

Other useful websites include:

www.nationalonlinesafety.com

<https://www.internetmatters.org/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

Should you have further concerns please do not hesitate to contact the safeguarding lead in your child's school.

Regards.

Andy Jessop
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