



LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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Jeannine Durkin
Acting Superintendent

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Dear Lowell Families,

Over the past few days, you may have heard news reports, about the resurfacing of an internet phenomenon, *The Momo Challenge*. The challenge centers around a disturbing character suggesting dangerous tasks for children to perform, including potentially hurting themselves or hiding for an extended period of time. From what we have learned, these and other suggestions can also be found spliced into some YouTube videos. This challenge may also occur through an app called WhatsApp, which could function on both phones and tablets. Please also know that there are several news outlets reporting that *The Momo Challenge* is all a hoax. We feel it is important to air on the side of caution and afford parents the opportunity to review this information and make the best decision for your children.

Included in this correspondence are some tips that you might access if you decide to speak with your children about this Internet challenge. Given the connection and concern with messages in videos, it also recommended that you monitor what your children are watching and screen the videos, even if they appear to be safe, to ensure their viewing does not include harmful messages.

Several links to news stories from Fox Boston and CBS News are included for your information.

<https://www.boston25news.com/news/-momo-challenge-encourages-teens-to-self-harm-attempt-suicide/925845631>

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/momo-challenge-resurfaces-police-issue-warning-to-parents/>

While these stories certainly portray a very concerning message, we know our children face a variety of challenges in managing emotions, dealing with sadness, anxiety, peer pressure and making responsible choices, so this may be an opportunity to speak with your children about these important issues.

Please view this link for simple safety tips.

<https://nationalonlinesafety.com/resources/platform-guides/momo>

Thank you for your partnership in supporting our students and their safety. As always, if you have any questions or concerns about how to support your children through this or any other issue, please reach out to your school administrators.

Respectfully

Jeannine M. Durkin

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Superintendent for the Lowell Public Schools