

Dear District families,

As some of you may be aware, there has been increased national and international media coverage regarding an online issue being referred to as “[The Momo Challenge](#)” which involves an internet meme that encourages self harm has recently resurfaced. Momo is being reported as an [internet hoax](#), however, we felt it was important to make you aware of it.

Given the growing national media coverage of the Momo Challenge, experts on mental health caution that such hysterical news coverage could potentially prove harmful and may cause increased anxiety, stress and exposure to topics that are difficult for children to process.

While this challenge is a hoax, online safety for children is not. We encourage parents to have intentional conversations with their children about what they encounter online. These discussions could include:

- Reminding children to never contact strangers online, on any platform;
- Encourage children to share any worries or concerns with you;
- Ensure children understand the importance of not giving personal information to anyone they do not know;
- Tell children no-one has the right to make them do anything they do not want to do;
- Set privacy systems on devices with your child as a way to have the conversation about safety.

For additional resources on internet safety we recommend [Common Sense Media](#) and resources from the American Academy of Pediatrics including their tips for creating a [Family Media Plan](#).

Our school is committed to teaching and encouraging online safety. In addition to internet filters and monitoring software to help keep our students safe online, all YouTube videos must be approved by teachers before students may view them on a district device. Teachers, staff and district employees also monitor use of technology by our students and we begin teaching digital citizenship with our youngest learners beginning in kindergarten through 12th grade.

As always, if you have questions or need support with respect to discussing online safety with your child, please contact your school office.

Sincerely,

Craig Gerlach, Ed.S.  
Superintendent