



Mount Sinai Union Free School District

118 North Country Road
Mount Sinai, New York 11766
(631)870-2550
(631) 473-0905 (Fax)

Maureen Poerio
District Clerk/Executive Assistant

Gordon Brosdal
Superintendent of Schools

Lynne Kirchenko
District Treasurer

Dear Mount Sinai Families:

It has been brought to our attention that there is a challenge that is spreading across social media called the “Momo Challenge”. Momo is a social media account that can be found on Facebook, YouTube and Whatsapp. When a person interacts with the account, they begin to receive pictures of Momo, a terrifying image of a bug-eyed toothless woman. Momo responds almost immediately with threatening messages and violent images to the user. “She” says that she knows personal things about the user and uses fear and threats to challenge the user.

Momo starts with simple challenges like waking up at odd hours of the night or overcoming a fear; then the challenges take a dangerous turn, such as asking you to post photos or videos of cutting your arms or legs, jumping off of a roof, or other risky activities.

As the challenges intensify, the last thing Momo pressures you to do is to commit suicide. If the user fails to accept or pass any of the challenges, Momo sends even more threatening and violent images and texts until the user is coerced into doing the challenge. If none of these pressuring tactics work, Momo threatens to visit you in person, or while you’re sleeping and curse you. This can be terrifying to young kids and teens.

Children may be targeted by others to interact with the Momo account as a form of cyberbullying and they do not possess the coping skills to deal with the pressure—both from the challenges and from the bullies.

We recommend that you talk to your child about the Momo Challenge. Ask them if they know what it is. Have they heard of it? Have they tried it? If they don’t know about it, share the dangers associated with the challenge. Discuss a plan that includes what they can do if they receive a message with the Momo Challenge.

Also, check your child’s phone and/or computer regularly. The Momo Challenge is not the first challenge to encourage kids to participate in dangerous activities (the Slenderman and the Bluewhale challenge are similar challenges that were popular several years ago). If your child is engaging in the Momo Challenge, or any other similar challenge, they will probably not volunteer that information to you.

In the district, the word “Momo” has been blocked so students will not be able to access it on their chromebooks or other computers.

As always, if you have any questions, please contact us at any time. We want to make sure we keep the line of communication open with our families ensuring the safety of all our children.

Sincerely,
Gordon Brosdal
Superintendent of Schools