

SCHOOL DISTRICT #81
(FORT NELSON)

P.O. BOX 87
FORT NELSON, B.C.
VOC-1R0

TELEPHONE (250) 774-2591
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February 28, 2019

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We wanted to send you some information regarding the Momo Challenge we received from Safer Schools Together. The Momo Challenge first started in 2016 on a mobile instant messaging application. A phone number associated with the name Momo and a picture of a girl with bulging eyes and widespread mouth is often associated with it and attempts to engage students in messaging back.

The nature of the messages usually start out innocent such as "wanna play a game?" which can then evolve into Momo encouraging the child to engage in self-harm and suicidal behaviours. The motive to follow through with the challenge is that Momo tells the child that they know where they live (the address can typically be found through reverse search of the phone number) along with their parent's name, which is generally connected to the phone number. This can escalate to threats towards family and or loved ones if they do not follow through with the challenge or if they contact local authorities.

Recently the Momo Challenge has reappeared in multiple YouTube videos that are specifically intended for younger audiences. Typically, the Momo Challenge will be featured in videos (such as Peppa Pig, Paw Patrol, Minecraft gameplay) that come from new or unreliable YouTube accounts and begins 5-10 minutes into the episode, after attempting to establish as a legitimate video. Parents/Caregivers should carefully monitor what their children watch on YouTube and only allow them to watch trusted channels.

Online challenges such as the Momo Challenge unfortunately do circulate quite regularly. Parents should not overreact; however, it is important that they speak with their children regarding all aspects of their online activity and explain potential risk of using certain streaming platforms so that they can recognize dangerous online behaviour. If you have concerns about your children accessing Youtube, please be aware that you are able to block Youtube from your internet router <https://www.wikihow.com/Block-Unwanted-Site-From-Your-Router>.

Students should be encouraged to report concerning online behaviour that makes them feel uncomfortable to a trusted adult.

List of some Approved Youtube Channels: • Ryan ToysReview
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChGJGhZ9SOOHvBB0Y4DOO_w • Blippi
<https://www.youtube.com/user/BlippiVideos> • The Axel Show
<https://www.youtube.com/user/theaxelshowadventure> • CookieSwirlC
<https://www.youtube.com/user/CookieSwirlC> • Toys Unlimited
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzldYMDAtTsWucGCZyZvN6w> • Peppa Pig – Official Channel <https://www.youtube.com/user/theofficialpeppa>



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Caution should be utilized if children have access to Youtube on their mobile devices.

Alternatively, many streaming apps such as Netflix have Kid Friendly functions that can be turned on to allow children to browse and stream videos without being exposed to inappropriate content.

Sincerely,



Diana Samchuck
Superintendent
SD 81 Fort Nelson

