



EAST RUTHERFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Board of Education

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

As we approach the close of Winter and transition into Spring, I wanted to share some information with you to help continue to keep our children safe. I encourage you to monitor your children's social media as there is a dangerous social media phenomenon called the "Momo Challenge." Please use this as an opportunity to remind your children not to accept any invitation to play from an unknown number and not to click on unidentified links.

The Momo Challenge can be found on WhatsApp (a free smartphone messaging application), Minecraft and on Facebook. This is just one example of dangerous "games" on social media. This "challenge" involves a frightening avatar making contact with a child from an unknown number or name. The child is encouraged to commit dangerous and potentially violent acts and tasks through social media and video games, and provide photos as proof.

One of the first clues for parents to be concerned with is the image of a Japanese statue of a woman with bulging eyes and scary features. Children are given the series of tasks to finally meet the "Momo." I also encourage you to remind your children to change email and social media passwords frequently and block unknown numbers inviting them to play immediately. Please notify your principal or school counselor of any attempted contacts to your children with this form of cyber-bullying spreading through social media and cell phone.

While these digital venues are blocked on district-issued devices, individuals may still be able to access such sites through their personal devices and accounts. Currently, there are no confirmed uses of this "Challenge" in the East Rutherford Public School District, however, I feel it is important to share information to help build awareness and keep our children safe. You can learn more about the "Momo Challenge" by visiting the links below. Please be warned that some of the images and stories may be disturbing:

["Momo Challenge" - A Dangerous Viral Game, Prompts Warnings to Parents](#)

[The "Momo Challenge": Are Your Children Playing It? What You Need to Know](#)

[What Is the "Momo Challenge?" 5 Things to Know About Game](#)

To assist you in considering age appropriateness for children's use of technology and time spent on social media, I am also providing you with some links that offer advice and assistance:

[13 Tips for Monitoring Kids' Social Media](#)

[Safe Search Kids](#)

[Media Guidelines for Kids of All Ages](#)

Thank you for taking the time to read this important information. Again, if you have questions or concerns, please contact your child's principal and/or school counselor.

Sincerely,


Giovanni A. Giancaspro
Superintendent of Schools