

#internetsafety  
#publichealth5-19service



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# INTERNET SAFETY MOMO CHALLENGE FACTSHEET

This factsheet will provide you some helpful tips on keeping your child safe online as well as some links to lots of very useful websites.

## What it is:

Coined the “suicide challenge”, Momo is a new viral game that encourages players to perform a series of challenges in order to meet ‘Mother Bird’ - a disfigured character (inspired by Japanese art) with bulging eyes and untidy black hair on a chicken-like body.

Light-hearted and fun at the outset, this game experience quickly darkens, absorbing players who are encouraged to perform acts of violence and self-harm through a series of progressively risky challenges. Originating in Mexico, it is easily accessed through social media shares (predominantly Facebook and YouTube) and is rapidly spreading across the world.

## Why it's on our radar:

The challenges issued in this game present a serious risk to the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people in our schools here in the UK, as does the distressing content when a player refuses to carry on.

With worrying similarities to the ‘Blue Whale challenge’, it has also been linked to at least five cases of childhood suicide.

## The low down:

- Players are encouraged to contact Momo and provide their mobile number.
- They will then receive instructions to perform a series of challenges, via SMS or Whatsapp.
- Player refusal can trigger severely abusive messaging and their mobile device being hacked.
- The final challenge is to commit suicide in order to meet ‘Mother Bird’.

## Why children like it:

Sharing and commentary on Social Media platforms has created a level of intrigue and curiosity about this game, which is initially light hearted and fun.

Fundamentally, however, this is a game that targets vulnerable children and young people online, as those with mental health issues are more likely to be drawn to the psychological

nature of the challenges.

**What to do:**

- A person doesn't have to be searching for Momo themselves to be exposed to it and, unlike other games that children enjoy, there is no positive side to this.
- Teachers and parents need to educate/reinforce online safety, and in this way encourage children and young people to make the right choice and avoid this game:
- The importance of confidently saying "no" to invitations to play games from strangers
- Knowing why they should not click on unidentified links.
- Knowing how to 'block' unknown numbers and friend requests.

## VISIT THESE USEFUL WEBSITES

[Digital 5 A Day | Children's Commissioner for England](#)

[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

[www.kidpower.org](http://www.kidpower.org)

[www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk) ( Internet Watch Foundation)

[www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers](http://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers)

[www.parentzone.org.uk](http://www.parentzone.org.uk)

[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

[www.healthforteens.co.uk](http://www.healthforteens.co.uk)

[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

## MOBILE PHONE APPS

Flipd

Glued

NHS Go

Most WiFi networks will now incorporate a facility to manage internet access in the home and on different devices (N.B. This may be dependent on your account).

