



Whitney Point Central School District

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Superintendent of Schools

Patricia A. Follette

February 28, 2019

Dear Whitney Point Families and Community,

I would like to alert you to an alarming social media challenge targeting children and young adults called the Momo Challenge. This challenge has surfaced in other communities and has caused concern among schools and parents across the country because of its disturbing nature. We would like to share information about this challenge and urge you to monitor your children's use of social media and the Internet. We also ask that you remind your children not to accept any invitation to play an online game from an unknown person or number, nor click on any unidentified links.

The district is making efforts to ensure that our students are protected from such information. Our administration and counselors work closely with our faculty and staff to address internet safety and appropriate use of technology, and will continue to do so regarding this challenge. Our counselors, social workers, and school psychologists are ready to assist if necessary. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your child's principal and/or counselor.

The local news and social media have highlighted some of the dangers surrounding the Momo Challenge. This includes encouraging/threatening children to complete activities and tasks that include self-harm. It is rumored that the Momo Challenge has infiltrated some popular digital platforms that are targeted to children.

We want you to be aware of this viral trend and encourage you and other adults that provide direct supervision or your children to be vigilant of their activities and maintain open and honest communication with them.

Here is a link that provides information on the Momo Challenge, along with tips on how to talk to children about the dangers of this challenge: <https://www.heart.co.uk/lifestyle/parenting/momo-challenge-safety-tips/>.

Additionally, here is a link from New York State with resources to assist you in guiding your students to appropriate use of technology and the Internet: <https://its.ny.gov/keeping-kids-safe>.

Here are some helpful tips to keep your child safe online:

- Bringing up the Momo Challenge specifically may lead children to investigate it themselves. Instead, consider asking them whether they encountered anything online that caused them to be worried or upset.
- If your child is aware of this trend, remind them that MoMo is not a real person, cannot directly harm them and cannot tell them to do anything.
- Remind children never to contact strangers online, regardless of the method, and to never give out personal information.
- Tighten device settings and parental controls.
- Report and block any content that is harmful or disturbing.
- Supervise your child's online activity, limit video games and YouTube use to shared family spaces and keep an eye out for unknown phone numbers or email address.

Sincerely,

Patricia Follette

Superintendent