



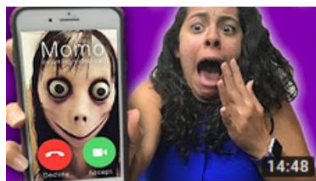
What is the Momo Challenge – and should I be worried about it?



THE MOMO CHALLENGE (Hoax or Real?) | 3AM CHALLENGE

Sam Golbach • 997K views • 2 months ago

GET THE MERCH: <https://fanjoy.co/samgolbach/> I try calling/texting Momo on Facetime and it worked! This is considered a 3am ...



Texting Momo *SHE Facetimed Me!* (Mystery Gaming)

The Skorys • 2M views • 1 month ago

For Mystery Gaming, Gabriella looks into Momo and even uses Whatsapp to message her! What do you think? Is Momo real or is it ...



DO NOT ASK MOMO THIS QUESTION AT 3AM!! *MOMO CALLED ME BACK* (GONE WRONG)

ImJayStation • 2.6M views • 3 months ago

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Media reports in recent months have suggested a new social media viral trend is to blame for children harming themselves, or in the worst cases reported, dying by suicide. The reports have been disputed, but if you have heard it mentioned in recent months, here is what you need to know.

What is the Momo challenge?

The Momo challenge is a viral social media phenomenon encouraging participants to commit acts of self-harm, and can be seen as a form of extreme cyberbullying. The 'game' takes place on social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp and players are asked to contact a character called Momo (the name associated with the disfigured avatar) through messaging apps.

The players are then instructed to do a series of tasks, often involving self-harm, followed by a final challenge demanding that participants commit suicide. If you refuse to do what Momo asks, the character threatens to steal your personal information and images and share them on the internet.

Why has it been in the news lately?

Over the past couple of months, the game has been in the news frequently due to its alleged ties to three cases of teenagers committing suicide in South America and Asia. Although police cannot prove conclusively that the game directly led to the suicides, all the victims were reportedly playing the game and their families are blaming it for the tragedies.



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In August, a 12-year-old girl and a 16-year-old boy in Colombia killed themselves within 48 hours of each other after the boy introduced the girl to the game. These cases were the most recent suicides allegedly caused by the game, preceded by the suicide of a 12-year-old girl in Argentina and an 18-year-old boy in India earlier this year.

There are many similarities between the Momo challenge and the Blue Whale challenge which received a lot of attention in 2016 and 2017 when it was associated with the suicides of around 130 people in Russia. It could never be proven that the Blue Whale challenge was directly to blame for the suicides but several victims published pictures of a blue whale on their social media profile before killing themselves.

Why is the distorted face associated with the game?

The characteristic distorted face with the bulging eyes and the cheek-to-cheek smile which has now become the avatar of the Momo challenge was not created in relation to the game at all. The statuette of a woman's head mounted on a bird's body was originally a piece of art nicknamed 'Mother Bird' created by the Japanese studio Link Factory. It was on display at the Tokyo's horror art show Vanilla Gallery where someone snapped a picture of it which was then in turn used to lay the basis for the character Momo.

The artist and Link Factory have nothing to do with the game as the art piece was never intended to be the mascot for the obscure social media phenomenon.

What do I need to look out for?

It is important to remember it is very rare that children have harmed themselves due to the trend and much of its profile has been built upon social media exaggeration. It has received attention largely due to YouTubers and Vloggers using it as a hook to gain more views. A quick YouTube search will reveal multiple videos of people trying to contact 'Momo', which while trivializing the issue has added to its urban myth.

Although there is no evidence of the game surfacing in the UK, children may be aware of it and it could be useful to understand what it is. Since children get in touch with Momo using WhatsApp, make sure that your child has enabled the privacy settings the app offers as well as having live locations settings turned off. Unfortunately, there are no parental controls on the instant messaging app beyond this but talk to your child and remind them not to get in touch with people they do not know on social media.