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Information from Cleveland Police

Momo Challenge

Parents are being warned that the web suicide game **Momo** is being hidden into innocent YouTube videos catered for Children such as Peppa Pig and Fortnite.

Children have reportedly been left terrified after images of the disturbing character appeared on their screens. The image of the Momo statue which is from Japan was created by special effects company 'Link Factory' and was displayed in a Tokyo museum in 2016. The image is of a scary looking female with dark hair and bulging eyes.

The Momo challenge which is similar to the Blue Whale Challenge where members are challenged to communicate with an unknown number via messaging applications such as Whats App, Facebook and Instagram. It allegedly involves challenges that encourage children to engage in a series of violent acts that end with suicide.

Should participants decide they no longer want to be involved in the game it is reported that they are sent threats of harm towards themselves and their loved ones.

Cleveland Police have been made aware of a report where a child has been contacted via Instagram private message asking the child if they wanted to play the "Momo game".

The message said "Game one, cut yourself and send pics" the child failed to respond and alerted a parent. The child was advised that if they cut themselves they will "live longer".

Cleveland Police are still making enquiries into the challenge to confirm its validity.

ADVICE

Parents are advised to talk regularly with their children about their online presence, and reassure them they can share anything with you no matter how delicate the nature is. We recommend the following to help keep children safe online:

- Set parental controls on devices
- Always use privacy settings on social media and online games
- Don't trust any unknown numbers
- Block unknown numbers
- Don't click on any unidentified links
- They should not do anything that makes them feel uncomfortable
- Change passwords regularly
- Keep account and personal information secure
- Keep your computer software up to date
- Use antivirus software
- Make sure your child knows their options if they are suffering any type of cyber crime

There are many online resources that can give some excellent advice on how to keep your child safe online

- www.internetmatters.org
- www.net-aware.org.uk
- www.saferinternet.org.uk
- www.ceop.police.uk

Crime Prevention Co-ordinator
Cleveland Police