

Dear Parents,

Recently, news reports indicated that there is a dangerous online game that encourages young people to harm themselves: the Momo challenge. According to media, “Users who engage with Momo on WhatsApp are sent disturbing and graphic photographs and in some cases are ‘doxed’ into self-harm and suicide. Doxing is a technique used to hack into someone’s personal information to exploit, harass, or blackmail.” Districts are being warned that images of Momo are being spliced into children’s videos on YouTube.

Atlanta Public Schools provides training to school staff each year on suicide awareness. If a student is ever in crisis at school, steps are taken to safeguard their well-being. This includes making an assessment, referring to the proper authorities, and the implementation of a safety plan. We are committed to helping students and are available to provide support when needed.

It is our intention to warn you so that you may have a heightened sense of awareness regarding this concern. This topic reminds all of us of the importance of building positive, trusting relationships with students. Suicide prevention involves all of us, and as much as possible, we want to prevent the impact the effects of the Momo challenge may have on our students.

The Georgia Department of Education has shared the following resources that can be used by parents to talk with their children about the content in the show and about how they can seek help if they need it. We care about our students and are deeply committed to suicide prevention. Please reference the links below and use them to talk with your students about this topic. Counselors and Social Workers may also assist with linkages to professionals who may help.

- <http://www.suicidology.org/ncpys/warning-signs-risk-factors>
- <https://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-Conditions/Related-Conditions/Risk-of-Suicide>

If you are concerned about your child or believe your child needs immediate help, please reach out to:

**Georgia Crisis & Access Line** is the 24/7 hotline for accessing mental health services in Georgia: 1-800-715-4225

and/or the

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** has trained counselors available 24/7: 1-800-273-8255.

The Lifeline staff can refer you to resources in your community.