



## NEWTOWN HIGH SCHOOL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION/CITY OF NEW YORK  
48-01 NINETIETH STREET, ELMHURST, NY 11373-4099  
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JOHN J. FICALORA  
*Principal*

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

Some of you may have been hearing reports about the “Momo challenge,” an apparent viral hoax that has been generating media attention. We want to take this opportunity to remind our school community of the importance of being aware of what our young people are watching, how they use social media, and how you can encourage safe online practices. Online safety is a critical component of our work in schools, as well as at home with you as our partners.

We encourage you to help promote online safety at home by taking the following steps:

1. Foster an atmosphere of openness and transparency about online activity. Talk with your child about the online content they are using or what they might be discussing with friends.
2. Remind them to come and talk to you if they see anything scary or threatening online.
3. Encourage them to use devices in shared family areas.
4. Check their privacy settings. Use restricted settings when possible, or make sure they know how and when to report and block any malicious or inappropriate content on the platforms they use.
5. Keep an eye on how your child is using the internet and social media.

The health and safety of our students is our highest priority and we are here to support parents and guardians in keeping our students safe online. We will ensure that staff remain vigilant during the school day so any child who may be impacted by negative online content is receiving the support they need. Please contact Mr. Ocampo at 718-595-8520 to address any concerns that you may have about your child, and to assist in answering any questions they might have or resources they may need. As always, guidance counselors and support staff are also available to assist students as needed.

In addition, below are some links to resources that may help inform your conversations at home:

1. <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/rules-for-students/digital-citizenship/parent-social-media-guide-for-students-12-and-under>
2. <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/rules-for-students/digital-citizenship/parent-social-media-guide-for-students-over-13>
3. <http://www.nysed.gov/edtech/internet-safety-and-cyberbullying>

Thank you for your continued partnership.

Sincerely,

John Ficalora  
Principal