What's Momo?

'Momo' is an image of a scary, doll-like puppet. It's been reported that:

* Anonymous individuals are adding children and young people on Facebook and WhatsApp (an instant messaging service), using the image of Momo as an avatar
* The user then encourages young people to do 'challenges', some of which can be dangerous or frightening, and tells them not to tell other members of their family what's happening
* The image has apparently also been [spliced into YouTube videos](https://www.theweek.co.uk/99893/momo-challenge-spliced-into-peppa-pig-and-fortnite-videos-warns-school), such as those about Peppa Pig or Mickey Mouse

**It's a hoax**

At the moment there's only anecdotal evidence, and no reports from official sources that the 'Momo challenge' has led to children harming themselves.

* [Police haven't reported any instances of children harming themselves](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-47393510) due to the 'Momo challenge'
* Samaritans said it was ['not aware of any verified evidence in this country or beyond'](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-47393510) that it's linked to self-harm
* A YouTube spokesperson also told the Guardian that it ['had not received any evidence of videos showing or promoting the Momo challenge on YouTube'](https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2019/feb/28/viral-momo-challenge-is-a-malicious-hoax-say-charities)

The ensuing media coverage may, however, be harmful and frightening to young people.

**Where did it come from?**

The image itself is a sculpture that originally featured in a Japanese gallery, and has nothing to do with the current 'Momo challenge'.

The 'Momo challenge' originally gained attention in July last year, and resurfaced this month when a Facebook post from a concerned parent went viral (it was shared thousands of times). It's since been covered by several news outlets.