



ERIK'S CAUSE

*Kids like Erik are dying every week –
YOU CAN HELP!*

Help Stop the Choking Game

Judy Rogg, Director
1112 Montana Ave. #167
Santa Monica, CA 90403
310-467-6113
www.erikscause.org
erikscause@gmail.com

FACT SHEET

It goes by lots of names, including ...

Pass Out Challenge *Knock-Out* **TapOut** **Hangman** **FaintingGame**
GoodKidsGame *Airplaning* **BlackOut** **Elevator** *Flatliner* **Space Monkey**

Pass-out activities (commonly known in the media as “the Choking Game”) have been around for generations. Studies indicate that kids experiment with this for non-sexual reasons (e.g., curiosity, peer pressure, the mistaken belief that it is safer than drugs) because they are unaware of the dangers. Easy access to hundreds of thousands of “how to play” videos on YouTube and other sites allow this activity to flourish, letting kids believe it is safe, without adequate education of its dangers.

Who is doing this?

- Mostly boys and girls of all races and religions between the ages of 9-16
- Children play these “games” in groups and alone, using belts, hands, plastic bags, or ropes or they may simply hold their breath or hyperventilate until they pass out

Why would kids try this?

- Curiosity
- Peer pressure
- The thrill of escaping a so-called near-death experience
- It’s not illegal nor does it require acquisition of a product
- They believe it is safe

Risks Include

- Memory Loss
- Retinal Hemorrhaging
- Concussions and injuries from falling
- Stroke
- Seizures
- **Brain Damage**
- **Death**

Where are the Death and Injury Statistics?

- No public health databases currently monitor pass-out activities.
- Youth are rarely forthcoming about the activity when injured. Thus practitioners may not be aware that pass out games are a possible cause for unexplained falls and other injuries.
- Injuries are rarely attributed correctly and *many deaths are misclassified as suicide.*

Ways Kids “Play”

The physical goal of this activity is to restrict cerebral blood flow to the point of nearly or actually passing out for a variety of reasons including curiosity, competition, dare, and/or to experience an altered state. This is accomplished by a variety of methods, the most popular being:

- compression of the carotid arteries using hands or a ligature;
- compression to the chest after hyperventilation;
- competition or dare to see who can resist passing out the longest under a choke hold (e.g., tap-out or submission holds typically used in mixed martial arts).

The Choking Game Differs from Other Risk Activities

- Is not illegal and has no deterrent or legal consequence
- Does not require acquisition of a product
- Can be “played” alone
- Difficulty in knowing when the damage occurs since it interrupts basic brain function

Did You Know ...*

- A majority of kids surveyed have heard of The Choking Game
- Most of them know someone who has participated in these activities
- 6 – 16% of kids surveyed admit that they have “played” it themselves
- 90% of those who “played” learned it from their peers
- A majority of these kids were unaware of the dangers

Meanwhile...

- 93% of parents were unaware of these pass-out activities
- 33% of physicians are unaware of The Choking Game
- Without blood and oxygen ...
- Within 3 minutes brain damage starts
- Between 4 and 5 minutes the body begins to shut down
- 10 minutes can be too late

***Since you can't SEE the brain function,
you can't KNOW when the damage happens ...
This activity can kill kids the very first time***

***Between 3 and 6 pm on school days are the peak hours
when kids experiment with risky behaviors***

***HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS of “how to play” videos are easy to find on You Tube
and other social media – easy access for our kids to watch!***

**Even Smart, strong kids can make dumb
choices with deadly consequences ...**



**Some kids tried it only once. They didn't
know they were gambling with their lives ...**

For Information Contact us at www.erikscouse.org

Erik's Cause is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

All Donations are Tax Deductible

* Sources include 2008 Oregon Healthy Teens Study (<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5901a1.htm>) and 2012 Texas Crime Victim's Institute, Criminal Justice Center, Sam Houston State University (http://dev.cjcenter.org/files/cvi/Choking_Game_Report.pdf)
Other Sources include Center for Disease Control, 2009 Survey of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Njafter3.org, Lucastrong.com