



## News Alert

# Northeast Community Challenge Coalition

### **Kids try to get high by playing “Choking Game”**

Kids are trying to get high by choking each other. These pre-teens and teens usually aren't troubled, they're just looking for a quick, drug-free rush. The goal is to cut off the oxygen supply to the brain until they become light-headed and then pass out. The second high comes when oxygen rushes back into the brain, giving the participant a feeling of euphoria. The primary goal is a brief alteration in consciousness, according to Dr. Thomas Andrew, who answered questions for ABC News viewers (To see a video of a 15-year-old who engaged in the choking game, click on the video on the top right of the page at: <http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/story?id=2991264&page=1>). The activity is primarily done among those in the 9-14-year-old age bracket.

The game can result in permanent brain damage and even death. It only takes three minutes without oxygen for the brain to suffer irreversible damage to such areas as memory, balance and the central nervous system. If the child crosses the fine line when the brain is requesting oxygen, the person dies, according to anesthesiologist Dr. Ashish Sinha at the Hospital for the University of Philadelphia in a news article at [www.nbc10.com](http://www.nbc10.com).

In addition, Dr. Andrew said if a small group of nerve cells are stimulated, the heart can be stopped. Other problems include traumatic injury if a person falls after being choked. In addition, when someone combines chest compression with hyperventilation, the blood chemistry can change, causing an electrical short-circuiting of the heart.

The game is also called the Pass-out Game, Fainting Game, Tingling Game, Dreaming Game, Rising Sun, Gasp, Knockout, Space Cowboy, Space Monkey, Blackout, Snuff (out), Speed Dreaming, Tap Out, and Twitching Game.

Clues to look for include unusual marks around the neck, bloodshot eyes, complaints of headaches, and belts and ropes with unusual knots.

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