

# Disturbing New Trend Encourages Children to Strangle Themselves

A Bernards Township, New Jersey teenager, whose name has not been released, is the latest to die from the potentially deadly “choking game,” also called “space monkey,” “fainting game” and “flatliner.”

The disturbing teen trend involves cutting off oxygen to the brain, which causes a feeling of euphoria. This is achieved by strangulation, usually self-strangulation. A teen will make a noose using household items such as belts, neckties or computer cables, then literally choke themselves until they reach hypoxia, which is oxygen deprivation to the brain. It feels good. It’s often fatal.

Teenagers, however, often gravitate towards risky behavior.

In a letter to parents about the choking death, Bernards Township Superintendent of Schools Nick Markarian wrote, “The early-adolescent brain does not process information in the same manner as an adult brain, and so children in this age group are not able to fully understand the serious consequences,” according to .

Children between the ages of 9 and 16 are most likely to experiment with the “choking game.”

## 8 Warning Signs Your Child’s Involved with the “Choking Game”

- Bloodshot eyes
- Broken blood vessels on the face or eyelids
- Mood swings
- Disorientation after being left alone,
- Frequent and occasionally severe headaches

- Bruises or marks around the neck
- Knots in neckties
- Belts, ropes or plastic bags left in bedrooms

Markarian advised parents to talk to their children about the dangers of the “choking game.”

All told, the game is thought to be responsible for more than 1,000 deaths since 1934, according to Games Adolescents Shouldn’t Play, or GASP, an organization committed to raising awareness about the activity and therefore putting a stop to it. {eo}

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