



THE CHOKING GAME

It's called "The Choking Game" for a reason - children believe this dangerous behavior is just another game. What they do not realize is that playing can end their life or leave them with permanent brain damage.

Children and teens are cutting off blood flow and oxygen to the brain to get what they believe is a safe high. Often starting as a social activity, this so-called "game" becomes even more dangerous when some turn to "playing" alone using restraints around their necks.

When playing alone, there is no one to save them if they pass out, and accidental hanging becomes a real risk.

The dangers of the Choking Game are not taught as part of most drug and health education curriculums, so children are not learning the dangers. Instead, they learn how to play on the internet or from friends who already know how. Education is the most important step in preventing another child from accidentally cutting his or her own life short.

Hayley Cunningham is a Freshman at Furman University whose life was changed forever because of the Choking Game. When her cousin died playing the game, it was completely unexpected: he was a happy, popular, active, and intelligent thirteen-year-old. As it turns out, his character was typical of children who play - the Choking Game attracts those who want to experience a rush but do not want to abuse drugs or alcohol. Hayley's cousin played the game because he thought it was a safe way to have fun. This mistake cost him his life and shattered the lives of his entire family.

Since then, Hayley has been fighting to spread the word about the dangers of this deadly "game." She has told her story and presented the troubling facts to teachers, school administrators, students, and parents and has presented at various medical conferences with world-renowned adolescent medicine specialist, Dr. Hatim Omar. Now that she is in Greenville, she wishes to continue her mission by working with Greenville Family Partnership to educate children and all those who love them about the dangers of this deadly activity. Hayley adapts the content and length of her presentations depending on the audience; presentations can range from 20 to 45 minutes and target adult and child listeners.



Things You Need to Know:

- What is the Choking Game?
- Who is playing?
- Why do children play?
- What are the warning signs?
- How can we prevent children from playing?