



STURGEON HEIGHTS SCHOOL

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February 23, 2010

To parents of students at Sturgeon Heights School:

We have been alerted to an issue for concern with pre teen and teenage students in our area. There has been recent media attention to a behavior which has been a topic of conversation with students at our school called the "choking game" or "tap out".

The "choking game" refers to an activity where the individual is deprived of oxygen either self inflicted or assisted to the point of losing consciousness before releasing the pressure that restricts airflow.

This behavior is very dangerous and certainly there are several cases documented of brain damage and deaths due to this behavior that have occurred in Canada over the past decades.

In response to this concern, our school has developed an education module that is being delivered through our health program to students in grade 5 through 9 over the next few days. Depending on the age level of the class there will be some graphic information that is shared with students with the intent of ensuring they know the extreme hazards of depriving oneself of oxygen. The teaching resource we will be using to frame our program is drawn from resources approved by Sturgeon School Division's mental health professionals. Please see <http://www.stop-the-choking-game.com/en/home.html> for more information on this topic. Specifically the PowerPoint presentation we used to focus our junior high students on the issues can be viewed at <http://www.stop-the-choking-game.com/en/involved.html>

Undoubtedly, you will have conversations with your child about this behavior that is rumored to be a curiosity to students.

Sincerely,

Garnet Goertzen, Principal