



ERIK'S CAUSE

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

“Help Stop the Choking Game”

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2015 HIGHLIGHTS

Another exciting year! A special thanks to those who have generously donated. Your dollars allow us to travel to conferences, teach in communities, and stem the tide of this deadly activity. It is heartbreaking that kids still die from this senseless and preventable "game." We continue our dialogue in the press and at conferences, as well as working with schools and communities to integrate awareness.

We invite your help to continue our efforts:

Please consider us among your charitable causes ... share our efforts with family and friends.

Tax-Deductible Donations of any amount are appreciated and can be made at

www.erikscouse.org/donate

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Your ideas are as vital as financial support.

Please send suggestions via return email or to erikscouse@gmail.com

The July 2014 feedback from the NIJ grant evaluators underscores the crucial need to collect statistical data to prove the wide scope of the problem. But the "Catch-22" remains: studies are needed to collect the data in order to study it; but one needs existing data to demonstrate the need for the studies. Anecdotal data appears to be insufficient to win over decision-makers. Efforts to proceed continued throughout 2015. To this end, we began learning and using Tableau:

Data Collection/Analysis/Increased Web Presence:

- Tableau: began to collect data and create visualizations to provide a more powerful way to show why this is an issue.
 - Worked with Tableau Foundation Expert to strategize best avenues to demonstrate thru data; trained us and helped to create data templates
 - Created templates for death/injury map, news article map, number of videos on YouTube and number of views of some "how to play" videos
 - Discussions with Data Analyst Expert re analyzing student survey data in Tableau of our trainings in Utah.

Awareness Efforts, Community Presentations and Seminar Speaking Events throughout 2015:

- Seattle, WA – February 2015:
 - After the death of a 14 year old student, I trained a school counselor at Nathan Hale High School in Seattle. She did an in-service for the teaching/professional staff at the school. Unclear whether they would want to train students.
- Cedar City, UT – February thru May, 2015:
 - 5th, 7th and 10th grade Health classes were taught Erik's Cause curriculum by Health teachers (7th and 10th grades) and Counselors (5th grades). Several hundred children. Very positive feedback.

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- Hawthorne, CA – March, 2015:
 - Bilingual parent/student training session at Hawthorne Middle School (returning after successful sessions). Approximately 40 attendees (parents and children together)
- Simi Valley, CA – April and May 2015:
 - Two separate sessions (one in April and one in May) Simi Valley parent social media education presentation - 150-200 parents. Contributed to Simi Valley's social media education sessions for parents re teen brain development, proliferation of "how to" videos on the Internet, and how to really talk with your kids so they will listen.
- Santa Monica, CA, SMASH (Santa Monica Alternative School House) – May 2015:
 - A Parent-student evening (as the school's request after having caught a group of 6th graders playing "the fainting game" on their school grounds ... approximately 50 attendees. We did a full training for parents and students together, then separated parents and students (parents got additional information and students debriefed)
 - Also ... SMMUSD has approved parent/student evenings for all middle schools, not just SMASH
- Santa Monica, CA – August 2015:
 - Venice Family Clinic – trained approx. 15 therapists/clinicians as to our program so they can better serve their clients
- Fortaleza, Brazil – August 2015:
 - Instituto Dimicuida's 1st International Colloquium. Video teleconference presentation of our program to approximately 360 educational and mental health professionals.
- Lake Isabella, CA – October 2015:
 - Parent/student evening for the general community, organized by Tim and Karen Landrum after the 2014 death of their son. School superintendent in attendance along with approx. 40 parents and students. Press coverage (tv and newspaper) as well.
- Cedar City, UT – November thru December 2015:
 - Judy did a teacher refresher training, adding some additional content as well.
 - Judy also taught a parent training session for the district.
 - Also met with IT expert in the district to set up way for the students to take the pre and post training surveys online rather than via paper.
 - New school year (SY 2015-2016) commencement of 5th, 7th and 10th grade Health classes trainings taught by teachers and counselors. Will continue in 2016.
 - Online pre and post survey data: This school year, the majority of students will take the surveys online rather than via paper.
- Santa Monica, CA, SMASH (Santa Monica Alternative School House) – December 2015:
 - Follow up meeting (from the May 2015 meeting) to teach parents and students.

Press in 2015:

- July 2015:
 - LACOE Newsletter (LA County Office of Education), full page article on page 2 of their quarterly newsletter, circulated to thousands of educational professionals across LA County and California in general.
- October 2015:
 - Press (both TV and newspaper) re Lake Isabella presentation

Fundraising Event:

- "Kick-It" with Erik's Cause – October 2015. Kickball tournament and silent auction promoted and produced by Danielle Greenup. Approximately 50 attendees.
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Ongoing Collaborations:

- Leaders 4 Life – 2013 - ongoing
 - Collaboration efforts to continue presenting Erik's Cause training to students as a core part of their presentations to students at future seminars and workshops across Utah and other states
- Instituto Dimicuida – 2015 – ongoing
 - The Instituto is committed to bringing prevention education to Brazil. Plans in the works to have a 2nd International Colloquium in 2016 and provide a more in-depth training to professionals in Brazil.
- SafeKids.org – 2015 – ongoing
 - Judy met with Kate Carr, Executive Director of SafeKids.org. Although their focus is more on physical safety than risk behaviors, Kate offered to see how she could help connect us with coalitions with which they partner. To be continued.

A special thanks to those who have generously donated. Your dollars allow us to travel to conferences, teach in communities, and stem the tide of this deadly activity. I am heartbroken that kids still die from this senseless activity which is preventable through education. Our efforts are making a difference and we will continue to work with schools and communities to increase and integrate awareness.

On a personal note, it is hard to believe that I am entering my 7th year without Erik. This journey allows me to find meaning from his untimely death. I am inspired by others who have joined our fight. I remain grateful for your continued support and welcome both your donations and ideas for future growth.

Wishing you and your loved ones a peaceful and safe 2016. Happy Holidays! ❤️ Judy