



ERIK'S CAUSE

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

“Help Stop the Choking Game”

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2019 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.erikscause.org/donate**

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Your ideas are as vital as financial support.

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

We continue our important work.

This past year 19 deaths were reported to us of which at least nine occurred in 2019. (Deaths are often reported well-after they've occurred as families process their unimaginable grief and begin to reach out.) At least two known injuries were recently reported in the news as well.

The reality is that this dangerous activity is still "played" by kids across the the world, thinking it is innocent fun.

2019 Highlights:

- Enhancements to our Educational Module: We've added new strategies to our curriculum to help kids of all ages avoid peer pressure and have their own voice when in group settings.
- 6th Year Strong in Iron County Utah's 5th, 7th and 10th Grade Health Classes: Enthusiasm remains high in Iron County, Utah where teachers continue to show the nation that our program can easily be incorporated into ongoing Health curricula without making kids curious to try it. To the contrary, our data from Iron County shows that education does **not** make kids curious to try!
- New/Improved Brochure: We overhauled our brochure to more accurately present the challenge as well as the success of our solution! A copy is attached. We're happy to mail you hard copies if you like.
- Survey Question Accepted by CDC: We proposed a revision to the sole choking game question on the optional question list of CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) which they accepted and which became available states and localities to use on the 2019. This is very exciting because our question is intended to capture answers as to all the ways kids "play" this

activity. This year, Florida was the only state to use the new question. We await the results, which we hope to have in January or February. Stay tuned... !

- Miniskills Workshop at NASP's Annual Conference: Of more than 1,600 blind proposals submitted to the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) our proposal was one of those that was selected to be presented! Our presentation was well received and educated approximately 1,000 attendees (between the break-out session and our exhibit booth).
- Texas: Our wonderful advocates, Cynthia Jussen and Danielle Greenup, represented Erik's Cause at a community event in Belton and reached many professionals in the Belton and Austin areas. They continue to follow up on opportunities.
- Montana: A middle school near Missoula used our program in January 2019 to combat this activity with their 8th graders. Their survey data shows that 41% of the kids admitted to having played! They will be using our program again this coming year.
- Moorpark, CA: We presented our training to an 11th grade class at the High School at Moorpark College which was very well received.
- Northwest Hospital Council of Ohio: This wonderful non-profit added one of our choking game questions to their student surveys. Data captured from four counties thus far indicates between 3.5% - 6% of students stating they've "played" (either once or more than once).

2020 Plans Brewing:

- Help in Various Localities: We are in discussions with people in a variety of locales and are hopeful of potential collaboration to educate their communities. More to come ...!
- Continued Collaboration with LACOE: We remain a resource for the LACOE's Student Support Services Division and look forward to providing follow-up trainings in 2019.
- Conference Attendance: We are exploring pertinent conferences to attend that will help strategically to spread awareness. We welcome your input.

April 2020 will be a full decade since Erik died from this "game" which, frankly, blows my mind. I still have trouble fathoming he has been gone this long and never imagined my life would become a journey to help families and communities combat this preventable tragedy. I have been humbled and blessed by the amazing people I've met along this path and who have joined the cause. It truly takes a village ...

Thank you for your continued support. A special thanks to the generosity of those who have donated. Our efforts are making a difference. We will continue to work with schools and communities to educate and integrate awareness. Your support allows us to travel to conferences, teach in communities, and stem the tide of this deadly activity. It is heartbreaking that kids are still dying 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.

A special thanks to the generosity of those who have donated. Your dollars allow us to travel to conferences, teach in communities, and stem the tide of this deadly activity. It is seven years since Erik died from this "game." We are heartbroken that kids are still dying from this senseless activity which is preventable through education.