

October 22, 2008

Dear Parents and Guardians of SISD Students:

It has come to the attention of several Shepherd ISD staff members that a number of our teens and pre-teens may be participating in a potentially deadly activity that is claiming the lives of children across the US. It is called "The Choking Game". Acting alone or with friends, the goal of the choking "game" is to use belts, ties or bare hands to choke oneself and constrict the blood flow enough to nearly pass out and then release. The reduced blood flow and lack of oxygen to the brain causes lightheadedness (the "high") and the release allows a surge of blood back to the brain which causes a "rush". The consequences of these "games" can be seizures, brain damage, brain death, retinal hemorrhaging, stroke or unexpected death.

I would like to encourage you to become informed about this activity and sit down and openly discuss the dangers with your children. We need to work together to ensure that we are prepared with information, prevention and intervention strategies to ensure the safety of each SISD student. The following websites have valuable information regarding this issue:

- www.connectwithkids.com/tipsheet/2005/235_jun29/choke.html
- www.thedbfoundation.com/GeneralInfo.html
- www.kidsbesafeonline.com/thechokinggame.htm
- www.ChokingGame.net

If you would like to speak with someone about this dangerous activity, contact Mrs. Donna Turner, Director of Student Health Services at 936.628.3371, or email her at dturner@shepherdisd.net. If you would like to know more about the informational guidance activities concerning this issue which are planned for your child's campus, please contact the campus principal.

Sincerely,

Jody Cronin
Superintendent of Schools