

GARFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

There have been numerous severely dangerous “trends” on social media over the years. Please take note of the latest which has resurfaced with dangerous consequences in our area. The “Blackout Challenge” is a game, sometimes referred to as a choking or fainting game, where people hold their breath until they blackout to obtain a brief “high.”

Two New Jersey students participated in the game, at South Orange Schools, and it was reported that after the one student blacked out, he had “difficulty resuming breathing” and was brought to the hospital.

Incidents such as these are dangerous and can be avoided. We will work with staff and students during the school day regarding awareness of social media challenges, such as the blackout challenge. Please also speak with your children at home regarding their safety.

[In a 2008 report](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), officials listed warning signs that your child may be participating in this trend:

- Discussion of the game (including terms like “pass-out game” or “space monkey”
- Bloodshot eyes
- Marks on the neck
- Severe headaches
- Disorientation after spending time alone
- Ropes, scarves, and belts tied to furniture
- Unexplained presence of dog leashes, choke collars, or bungee cords

Yours in Safety,

Alexandra Bellenger

Acting Superintendent of Schools