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2013 Resolution on Prevention of Asphyxiation Games

WHEREAS, the Illinois PTA Legislation Platform Section 7, Protection of Children and Youth, Item a., maintains that we support adequate legislative and/or financial support for the protection, health, and welfare of children and youth; and

WHEREAS, it has been estimated that between 5 percent to 11 percent of youths participate in asphyxiation games (known as, *inter alia*, the choking game, the fainting game, the pass-out game, and suffocation roulette) to obtain a brief high by cutting off their supply of oxygen through self-strangulation or with a partner; and

WHEREAS, the adverse results of participating in asphyxiation games includes seizures, fractures, cognitive impairment, and death; and

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois has ranked as high as third in the nation for known incidents of asphyxiation games/activities by a non-profit organization attempting to track this information through media reports and voluntary reports of such incidents; and

WHEREAS, according to an American Academy of Pediatrics study, over one-third of pediatricians were unaware of youth participation in asphyxiation games, and only 1.9 percent of the physicians surveyed reported that they included this in their anticipatory guidance for youths, even though 64.9 percent agreed that it should be included in such guidance discussions; and

WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that pediatricians include timely anticipatory guidance concerning asphyxiation activities in their guidance discussions; and

WHEREAS, in a research study conducted by the University of Wisconsin, 82 percent of the fathers and 90% of the mothers participating in the survey agreed that information about asphyxiation games (Choking Game) should be included in drug education programs; and

WHEREAS, there is currently no requirement that preventative guidance for asphyxiation games be taught in Illinois schools; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois PTA and its constituent bodies work with like-minded organizations in supporting the tracking of incidents of asphyxiation games by health agencies to assess trends, determine prevalence, risk factors and protective factors to lead to more effective interventions and reduce participation in asphyxiation games; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Illinois PTA and its constituent bodies work with like-minded agencies to urge that during well care visits, pediatricians include preventative guidance regarding asphyxiation games,

assess youths' awareness of these activities, evaluate risks or signs of participation, and provide information about the dangers of such activities to children and youth and their parents; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Illinois PTA and its constituent bodies support the inclusion of information regarding the dangers of asphyxiation games in health classes and in other school-sponsored discussions concerning drugs and risky behaviors, that are already incorporated into the Illinois Learning Standards by the Illinois State Board of Education.