

Harmful Online Challenges

A viral trend that uses videos on social media platforms to motivate viewers to repeat an activity witnessed in the video, without regard to potential consequences, even if it risks harming or potentially killing the participant. Viewers are encouraged to record themselves doing the challenge and then upload the video with trending hashtags for others to find.

Online Challenges can be deadly, especially for children and teens. They may try challenges out of curiosity, for competition, peer pressure, a quick thrill, or due to boredom. However, given children's brains are not fully developed until the age of 25, they are unable to predict the potentially grave outcomes of these harmful challenges.

“The blackout challenge has been linked to the deaths of at least 15 kids age 12 or younger in the past 18 months”

— Bloomberg News, 2022

Types of Online Challenges

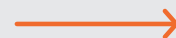


Often challenges are transmitted from peer-to-peer, fed to users' social media feeds through algorithms, or disseminated by social media influencers. They are also prevalent in gaming chat rooms. The viral nature of this phenomenon normalizes the dangerous activity, creating a perception that harmful challenges are “safe” and/or “fun”. Besides physical harm, some challenges can take a toll on the user's mental health as some involve humiliation, bullying, or self-harm.

Harmful online challenges include:

- Choking Challenge (aka Blackout, Tap Out, Knockout, etc.)
- Tide Pod Challenge
- Benadryl Challenge
- NyQuil Chicken Challenge
- Fire Challenge
- Car surfing
- Chroming

Scan here for more information related to specific harmful Online Challenges.



Protect Your Child

Be aware of dangerous online trends and discuss them with your child. Go outside of your family's comfort zone and have "hard talks" with your child. Ask if they've seen/participated in online challenges and explain the dangers to them.

Use caution with devices, social media, and communication apps. Delay when possible, especially by young children.

Create guidelines for your child's usage. Keeping devices out of your child's bedroom or the bathroom is a great start.

Provide parental supervision. Monitor your child's device with parental restriction (screen time) settings.

Start a Conversation

Let your children know they can always talk to you about anything, you will not judge them, and you are always there for them. As much as possible, be calm and grounded, and stay neutral as you talk to your child.

"I've heard about kids doing challenges they find online, like stunts/pranks/dares. Have you ever heard of any?"

"What were the people doing?"



"Have you or any of your friends tried an online challenge? What would you do if you received one?"

Share with your child that they should not participate and discuss possible negative outcomes and consequences.

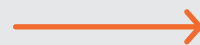


Take Action if your child has or is considering doing a challenge

- **Remain non-judgmental and loving.**
- **Keep the lines of communication open.** Continue to bring this topic into conversation with your child as more than one talk is required.
- **Report any harmful challenges** within the online platform, document, and take screenshots.
- **Seek help from a professional** who understands challenges.



Scan to learn more about dangerous online challenges.



Online Harms Prevention Action Kit
fairplayforkids.org

