

# Consortium Connection

February 2013

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## “Healthy Environment, Healthy Lifestyles, Healthy Community”

### The Choking Game

Although it is called a game, it is far from being considered a sport. This game is called the “Choking Game”, a dangerous activity intended to induce a partial or complete loss of consciousness for a period of time, brought on by the deliberate lack of oxygen, which can cause a long-term disability and death. Typically, those who play this game are trying to find a quick high without using drugs.

As defined by the CDC, the “Choking Game,” involves self-strangulation or strangulation by another person with the hands, arms, or a ligament (noose). This game is also known as the Fainting Game, Suffocation Roulette, Flat Liner, Pass-Out-Game, Space Cowboy, California Choke, Airplaning, Space Monkey, Dream Game, Blackout, Purple Dragon, Breath Play or Choke Out.

The Choking Game is popular and most commonly played by middle school students who may practice other risky behaviors. However, secure, high achieving students looking to have a thrilling experience have often been known to play this game. Males, ages 9 to 16 are the main participants. Although, it is not uncommon to see younger and older youth as well as females participating in the Choking Game. Most youth get involved because of peer pressure and curiosity.

Parents and others working closely with youth should be on alert for the Choking Game warning signs such as bloodshot eyes, bruising or red marks around the neck, frequently wearing a scarf or a permanently turned-up collar, experiencing frequent and severe headaches, tying bed sheets, belts, tee-shirts, ties, ropes in knots, wear marks on furniture from previous incidences, tying scarves or belts to bedroom furniture or doorknobs, disorientation after being alone, unusual need for privacy, or curiosity about asphyxiation.

Awareness of the “Choking Game” may not be widely known among adults because youth usually pass this game on to other youth privately and through the internet. Being aware and openly discussing the game with youth are important measures. If a youth is suspected of engaging in Choking Game activities, quick actions should be taken to address this behavior including seeking directions from a health care provider.

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## February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

The Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade wants you to know that there's a lot you can do to prevent teen dating violence and abuse.

Be aware that abuse can come in many forms including:

- **Physical Abuse:** Any intentional use of physical force with the intent to cause fear or injury, like hitting, shoving, biting, strangling, kicking or using a weapon.
- **Verbal or Emotional Abuse:** Non-physical behaviors such as threats, insults, constant monitoring, humiliation, intimidation, isolation or stalking.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Any action that impacts a person's ability to control their sexual activity or the circumstances in which sexual activity occurs, including rape, coercion or restricting access to birth control.
- **Digital Abuse:** Use of technologies and/or social media networking to intimidate, harass or threaten a current or ex-dating partner. This could include demanding passwords, checking cell phones, cyber bullying, sexting, excessive or threatening texts or stalking on Facebook or other social media.

One of the most important things you can do is keep the lines of communication open with your kids. Take steps to make a difference:

- Be a role model – treat your kids and others with respect.
- Start talking to your kids about healthy relationships early – before they start dating.
- Get involved with efforts to prevent dating violence at your teen's school.
- Call the National Dating Abuse Helpline at 1-866-331-9474 or text "loveis" to 77054, if you are worried about you teen.

You can help keep your loved ones safe and healthy. For additional information visit: <http://www.breakthecycle.org/>.

# 2013 FLORIDA WORKSITE WELLNESS FORUM AND AWARDS

**Friday, April 12, 2013**

7:30am - 4:30pm

**Miami Beach Resort**

4833 Collins Avenue

Miami Beach, FL 33140

3 RN, RD, CHES OR HR CREDITS AVAILABLE



## WHY WORKSITE WELLNESS?

This FIFTH ANNUAL Awards Ceremony presents an exciting opportunity to hear from a national leader in the field as well as meet local businesses already working to foster loyal employees and reduce their bottom line through worksite wellness.

## A CALL FOR NOMINATIONS!

**The DEADLINE for submission is Monday, March 18, 2013 at 12:00pm!**

Winners of the three categories will receive a **\$500** award to be used toward their program and will become honorary members of the Winners Circle:

- **Small Employer Group:** < 500 employees
- **Mid-Sized Employer Group:** 500 -1,000 employees
- **Large Employer Group:** > 1,000 employees

*Nominees are strongly encouraged to attend the Awards Luncheon. Each nominated organization with a complete and verified submission will receive a free ticket to the morning educational session with the purchase of a luncheon ticket (limited to two (2) attendees per nominated organization).*

Visit [www.worksitewellnessawards.org](http://www.worksitewellnessawards.org) for additional details.



# Upcoming Events

## Surgeon General Symposium on Health Equity in Florida: Beyond Diversity and Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles

You are cordially invited to attend the Florida Department of Health's *Surgeon General Symposium on Health Equity in Florida: Beyond Diversity and Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles*, to be held Wednesday, February 20, 2013, at the Florida International University Graham Center in Miami, FL. This symposium will be focused on discussing how to achieve health equity and promote healthy lifestyles in all communities across the state.

Please join the panelists and moderator Yolangel Hernandez-Suarez, MD, MBA, FOCOG, Chief Medical Officer of the Florida International University HealthCare Network to discuss this complex issue.

### Symposium Panel

- State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong
- Erin Kobetz, PhD, Assistant Professor, Department of Epidemiology and Public Health
- William Darrow, PhD, Professor Health Promotion and Prevention
- Karen D. Hamilton, Regional Planner, South Florida Regional Planning Council
- Maria I. Nardi, Chief, Planning and Research Division, Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces
- John M. Bowers, Property Manager, Architect, Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces

### Questions

- How can we create a society in Florida in which everyone has an opportunity attain their full health potential?
- What is being done in Florida to influence the range of personal, social, economic, and environmental factors that influence health status?

### Who should attend?

Health care professionals, community leaders, legislators, members of the media, and the general public are invited.

### Where

Florida International University  
Modesto A. Maidique Campus  
Graham Center Ballrooms  
11200 S.W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Miami, FL 33199  
(305) 348-2297

### When

February 20, 2013  
1:00- 3:00 p.m. EST

### Registration

Please complete the following registration, located at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/KL28W6R>. Once your registration is received by our team, you will receive an email confirmation within the day and additional information regarding the symposium. We encourage you to register early, as seating is limited. Please forward this invitation to others who may be interested in attending. **Registration will close at 5 p.m. EST on Friday, Feb. 15, 2013.**

For additional information or to participate in the Consortium:

Tel: 305-278-0442

[www.healthymiamidade.org](http://www.healthymiamidade.org)