Think Before You Try: The Truth About Viral Trends

Dear Students,

We live in a world where we see thousands of videos every day. Sometimes, it’s easy to get swept up in a "challenge" that everyone seems to be doing. However, it is vital to understand that what you see on a screen is often edited, staged, or just plain reckless.

The Serious Risk of Ingesting Non-Food Items

Recently, there have been viral trends that encourage people to eat things that are **not food**—like household cleaners, detergent pods, raw chemicals, or other dangerous substances. These challenges are not just "pranks"; they are incredibly dangerous.

Why it is dangerous: Your body is not designed to process these materials. Eating, swallowing, or tasting non-food items can lead to:

- Severe internal chemical burns to your mouth, throat, and stomach.
- Breathing problems or lung damage.
- Immediate, painful physical reactions that require emergency hospital care.
- Long-term health complications that could affect you for the rest of your life.

Why "Likes" Aren't Worth It

It can be tempting to participate in a trend to get attention, views, or to feel like part of a group. But please remember this: **No amount of online attention is worth your health.**

People who post these videos are often looking for shock value—they want to see how far they can push limits. They do not care about your safety, and they won't be there to help if you end up in the emergency room.

Make the Smart Choice

- **Be the voice of reason:** If a friend suggests a challenge involving eating or drinking something harmful, speak up. Say, "That’s not safe, and I’m not doing it."
- **Question what you see:** Just because something is "trending" does not mean it is a good idea.
- **Know your worth:** You don't need to do dangerous things to be funny, interesting, or accepted. Your real friends will respect you more for making safe, smart choices.

If you or a friend ever feel pressured to try something that could be harmful, please talk to a trusted adult, like a teacher, parent, or school counselor. We are here to support you in making safe, healthy decisions.

Stay safe and keep looking out for each other,

Your School Community