

A FEW NEW THINGS

April 2012

THE CINNAMON CHALLENGE: A WARNING

The cinnamon challenge is a dare that involves trying to swallow one tablespoon of dry cinnamon without the use of water or any liquid. This practice has recently gone viral on YouTube, complete with videos. It is also on Facebook and Twitter. Not only is this activity nearly impossible to do, but it is extremely dangerous, according to officials.

With that much cinnamon in a person's mouth, immediate choking follows. It cannot be dissolved by saliva alone. Choking may lead to vomiting and/or aspiration of the cinnamon into the lungs. This can lead to lung collapse or pneumonia and can trigger a severe attack in a child with asthma. The powder may also solidify in the throat, coat the esophagus and irritate tissues inside the head and neck, causing swelling.

Poison control centers are reporting a spike in calls related to this challenge. Medical authorities have seen several emergency room admissions. Since social media is fueling this type of public dare, parents need to closely monitor their child's social media devices. What may seem like a silly game can have serious health consequences.

(Sources: www.cinnamonchallenge.org; Dr. Mom, www.sacbee.com)

MOONROCK MARIJUANA

A new type of marijuana called "Moonrock" is on the scene. It has a THC level of 80% and higher. It looks sort of spongy, but it crumbles like a wafer cookie and sprinkles easily into a vaporizer, joint or bowl. The higher levels of THC have immediate and dramatic impact on the user. Just for comparison, Amsterdam has made THC over 15% a "hard drug" penalty. (Source: NebraskaPrevention@yahoo.com)



PROJECT X PARTIES

Project X is an anything goes-type teenage movie. In it three unpopular students gain immediate fame thanks to throwing a party at one boy's house when his parents are out of town. At the party, alcohol, ecstasy and social media are contributors to the party getting out of control. This is more than just a teen movie with them portrayed as having "fun." It goes way beyond fun with teens attempting to recreate Project X with their friends.

At this time of year, parents need to be even more vigilant than ever. In Houston, a Project X-inspired party turned deadly when one teen was shot and killed when other party guests began firing randomly into the crowd.

What are the goals of such parties: 1) Create a large group, easily done with social media; 2) Massive destruction of property; 3) Use of alcohol and other drugs

What can parents do? If you hear or see signs of such gatherings, consider following the steps of a proactive parent who caught wind of a local Project X party being planned:

- After he heard about the party, he asked his kids what they knew about Project X and then reminded them of where he stood on underage drinking and other drug use.
- He spoke to them about the potential real life consequences (legal, health and safety).
- He pointed out that even if the kids weren't drinking, smoking or using other drugs, they could still lose a lot simply by being present at one of these parties.
- He reminded them that if they found themselves at such a party, they could contact him and he would be there to pick them up.
- He helped them plan alternative activities for that night that were fun and safe and encouraged his kids to invite their friends and discourage them from attending the party.
- He networked with other parents to alert them and informed local law enforcement.

(Source: <http://drugfreeactionalliance.org>; ABC News)