

Social Media and the Influence on Teenagers

By CJ Wheeler

Social media. Facebook. Twitter. Instagram. Snapchat. These services are used to like posts, share images, and give opinions. However, the services can also be used to share different trends. Starting in 2011, the cinnamon challenge required the challenger to consume a spoonful of cinnamon in 60 seconds. It sounds harmless, as cinnamon is used in many recipes, but inhaling or consuming cinnamon can lead to vomiting, pneumonia, and perhaps a collapsed lung. The cinnamon challenge is only one of many dangerous challenges trending on the internet.

When YouTube was released in 2005, it allowed people to be creative and share their videos with others. Soon, certain people began to become noticed and started to gain fame, while other channels died out. YouTube users quickly realized that to acquire internet fame, there must be a trend to follow. The cinnamon challenge was the first trend. Users would record themselves eating a spoonful of cinnamon. This caused problems as cinnamon should not be inhaled into the lungs. The trend quickly changed however, as many trends do.

After the cinnamon challenge came the Duct Tape Challenge. The Duct Tape Challenge would have challengers tape themselves or their friends to a wall or pole. This can lead to injuries and loss of circulation, which can result in possible amputation. The Duct Tape Challenge was over in a few months, leaving a gap in people hungry for more modern and more dangerous challenges. The trend doesn't seem to be the challenge itself, but how badly one can hurt oneself or cause physical pain in general.

Mechanical vehicles, fire, laundry supplies, and duct tape are very different items which have one similarity: they are used highly dangerous challenges and can cause serious bodily harm. One very popular challenge is the Kiki Challenge. Drake, a famous Canadian rapper released a song "In My Feelings" in the summer of 2018. The rapper also dropped a music video, which included a dance. Many people repeated the dance, but instead of dancing at home, they would dance on the sidewalk while leaping out of their running cars down a street. The challenge can result in injuries, suspension of a license, and perhaps incarceration.

This challenge may be dangerous, yet it is not as dangerous as the Tide Pod challenge. Challengers would consume Tide Pods, claiming the popular laundry item looks like candy or dessert. It should be a simple fact, that cleaning products should not be consumed, vehicles should not be operated without a responsible driver, and physical harm is not a good gateway to internet fame. Perhaps a new challenge is to break the trend and get away from the internet and step outside without a cellphone to record the next ultimate challenge.