



Prevent Think Life Safety

For additional information, call 503-805-8482

Choking/Suffocation/Strangulation Safety

Children are vulnerable to choking/suffocation/strangulation from many sources. Food, small toys, plastic bags, old refrigerators, drawstrings in sweatshirts, or cords on window blinds are but a few of the household features that have caused children serious injury or death. It doesn't take long to review your home for things that can be hazardous to your child.

Choking:

- Food is probably the leading cause of choking among children. A child's airway can be very small at certain ages but at any age, some foods can get stuck in the throat. Help kids learn the limits of items they can swallow. Prepare their food to lessen the risk.
- Know how to perform the Heimlich Maneuver to dislodge an item stuck in any persons throat.
- Be especially vigilant with young children who explore their world by putting objects in their mouth. Keep a safe area so their exploration is productive, not deadly. Check small toys with a toilet paper roll. If the toy pass through the tube, it may be too small for a young child.

Suffocation:

- Plastic bags or other soft items can get wrapped around children, causing injury or death.
- In older children, serious injury can occur through "huffing" different products for a high or cutting off air to themselves to enhance a "high."

Strangulation:

- Entanglement is the leading cause of strangulation injuries and deaths.
- Clothing with drawstrings in hoods or just hoods alone can get caught on playground equipment or tree branches, capturing a child by the neck.
- Cords on blinds should be kept in a safe condition by not creating a loop so a child cannot become entangled by the neck. Newer designs allow for cordless blinds.