True Story
An 18-month-old boy was playing with his sister in a spare bedroom at their grandmother’s home. His mother and aunt were cleaning the master bedroom of the home. A short time later, the women entered the spare bedroom to find the boy unresponsive and lying on a mattress with the pull cord of a horizontal mini blind around his neck. The boy died of anoxic brain injury (the absence of oxygen) due to strangulation.

-From the files of MECAP
(Medical Examiners and Coroners Alert Project)

The Facts

- More than 2,000 children younger than age 15 die each year as a result of an unintentional home injury.
- Three leading causes of death in the home for this age group are fire/burns, choking/suffocation and falls.
- Among non-fatal unintentional home injuries, falls account for 41 percent.

What You Can Do

- Keep matches and lighters locked up and away from children. Check under beds and in closets for burnt matches, evidence your child may be playing with matches.
- Do not trap electric cords against walls where heat can build up.
- Do not place a child’s bed underneath a window – this places the child at risk for both falls out of the window and strangulation from long cords on window blinds.
- Where possible, do not use throw rugs in the bedroom, because they can create a trip hazard.
- Keep older children’s toys away from children younger than age 3 to eliminate choking hazards from small parts.

Source: KidRapt (UK Child Safety), United States Fire Administration

Led By

Safe Kids Greater Des Moines
Blank Children’s Hospital
Iowa Health System

Safe Kids Greater Des Moines, led by Blank Children’s Hospital, is a grassroots organization dedicated to preventing unintentional injury in children ages 0-14.

For more information call (515) 241-6293 or visit www.dsmsafekids.org.

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