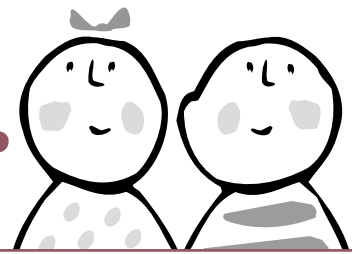




# SAFE KIDS CONNECTICUT Newsletter



DEDICATED TO REDUCING PREVENTABLE INJURIES AND DEATHS IN CONNECTICUT CHILDREN

*Dedicated to  
reducing  
preventable  
injuries and  
deaths in  
Connecticut  
children*

SPRING 2009

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## Choking Safety



Choking is a serious issue that many parents and caregivers may not think about. Each year, approximately 900 children nationwide under the age of 15 die from airway obstruction injuries (which include choking, suffocation and unintentional strangulation.) Kids under age 5, however, are most at risk.

The majority of choking injuries occur with food. To help prevent these injuries, do not allow children under age 3 to eat small, round or hard foods. This includes small pieces of hot dogs, hard candy, nuts, grapes and popcorn. Other hazardous food items to watch out for are raw vegetables, jellybeans, raw unpeeled fruit slices, dried fruits, grapes or chunks of meat.

What else can you do?

*(continued on page 2)*

### MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Safe Kids Connecticut is gearing up for a busy spring. For Safe Kids Week, we will be running



our annual Safe Kids Day on the lawn of Connecticut Children's on April 30th. Also that week, we are working with the Department of Public Health to get information on wheel safety out to all the Connecticut libraries.

On a different note, we are looking forward to piloting our "pedestrian rodeo" program we created. We hope to share this program with our coalition members who can adapt it to fit whatever age group they are working with. Everyone walks sometime—whether to school, a friend's house, with a dog or in a parking lot—and we want everyone to know how to do so safely. And finally, we continue to concentrate on "tweens" and will be running several focus groups to see how tweens and their parents/ caregivers most effectively receive information related to their safety.

Have a safe spring!

*Karen*

# Summer Safety

Trips to the emergency room for hydration-related injuries are consistently in the top 10 reasons for these visits for kids in Connecticut. Make sure that kids and adults are staying hydrated this summer, drinking water or sports drinks before, during and after play. •



## Child Passenger Safety Week 2009

After a few moves, CPS Week 2009 will be September 12th to 18th. Seat Check Saturday will be September 12th. Mark your calendars! •



Child Passenger Safety Technicians from Safe Kids Windham County and Safe Kids New London County after a successful car seat event on March 21st at Windham Hospital

## Cars Are Not Babysitters

With the temperatures getting hotter, it is important to be aware of children, heat and cars. Cars are not toys and kids should not use them for play. Here are some tips for keeping kids safe:




- ! Lock car doors when not in use.
- ! Teach kids that cars are not for playing or sleeping.
- ! Search the car when a child goes missing.
- ! Don't use keys to jingle in front of the kids. Plastic toy keys and real keys are similar and kids may confuse the two.

For more information, click on [www.kidsandcars.org](http://www.kidsandcars.org)


### Choking Safety

*(continued from page 1)*

#### SUPERVISE KIDS WHILE THEY ARE EATING.

-  Cut foods into small pieces and give babies soft foods that they don't need to chew.
-  Have children sit in a high chair or at a table while they eat. Don't let kids eat or suck on anything like candy while lying down or playing.
-  Encourage kids to eat slowly.

#### SEE WHAT THEY SEE

-  Keep small objects that are potential choking hazards out of your children's reach.



Get on the floor on your hands and knees, so that you are at your child's eye level. Look for *and remove* small items such as jewelry, coins, buttons, pins, nails and stones.



Keep all plastic bags out of reach.

#### MAKE TOYS SAFE



Have kids only play with age-appropriate toys. The toys hazard labels are not based development of child, but rather safety. For example, toys labeled for kids over 3 years should be kept away from kids under 3 as these toys may have small parts and could cause choking if placed in the mouth.



Check toys for damage. Any with sharp edges or loose small parts should be repaired or thrown away immediately.



Use Mylar balloons instead of latex balloons. Only kids over the age of 8 should be allowed to blow up balloons.



Sign up to receive product recalls with the Consumer Product Safety Commission at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov).

#### LEARN CPR



Learn CPR for infants and children and the Heimlich maneuver for choking.

*Information courtesy of Safe Kids USA*



## CHAPTERS AND COALITIONS UPDATE Spotlight on:

### Safe Kids Greater Waterbury

Spring has sprung and our Chapter is springing forward with new activities within our community. We are excited about the networking that has taken place our local Elks lodge and the Exchange Club and we have planned new and exciting activities over the next few months with both of them.

But we've also been very busy over the winter as well. Car seat technician Eileen Rondeau, Saint Mary's Hospital, continues to conduct programs on transporting children safely in motor vehicles through St. Mary's child birth classes. Her hands-on demonstration of the proper selection and installation of car seats has proven to be invaluable to Moms, Dads and caregivers.

SKGW, with the support of the CT DOT, conducted two re-certification classes for car seat technicians who have let their certification expire. The Waterbury Police Department has supported us with their training center to bring law enforcement and others back into the community to assist parents with this important message.

The car seat fitting stations at the Waterbury Police Department, Watertown Police Department and Naugatuck Police Department are actively assisting their communities by educating parents on the proper installation of their car seats. Through their tireless efforts, we know the lives they affect by reducing fatalities and injuries. Unfortunately we no longer have a fitting station at the Cheshire Police Department but would like to thank them for their

many hours of service over the past years by sharing their knowledge on safe transportation of children within their community.

We have networked with the coordinator at the Women's half way house in Waterbury to conduct periodic presentations on child passenger safety. The information given to the women there is so important for them to have as they re-unite with their families.

Buckle Bear is actively visiting children within our community. Over the past few months Buckle Bear has spent a week at the Cheshire YMCA and a week at the Head Start Program in Naugatuck educating the children on the importance of using their car seats and on buckling up.

We also connected with the Young Parents Program at a Waterbury high school. A presentation on car seats and buckling up was given to all students in the Child Development Classes by Officer Carangelo and Pat Zainc, two of our certified child passenger safety instructors from the Waterbury Police Department Community Relations Division.

Presentations to the wisest segment of our population on car seat safety and buckling up have been given at Senior Centers and health fairs. These presentations assist them with information when transporting their grandchildren properly.

Our committee made up of local police departments, fire departments, Campion Ambulance, Saint Mary's Hospital has assisted us in networking with other agencies to accomplish our

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

For more information  
[www.ctsafekids.org](http://www.ctsafekids.org)

**April 25 – May 2, 2009**

Safe Kids Week, "Raising Safe Kids: One Stage at a Time"

**May 17 – 23, 2009**

National Dog Bite Prevention Week

**May 17 – 23, 2009**

National EMS Week

"EMS: A Proud Partner in Your Community"

**June 1 – 7, 2009**

Sun Safety Week

**June and July**

National Fireworks Safety Months

*As seen above, June and July are National Fireworks Safety Months. But fireworks are now being advertised and sold year round. It is never too early (or too late!) to get the prevention message out.*

**June 27 - July 5, 2009**

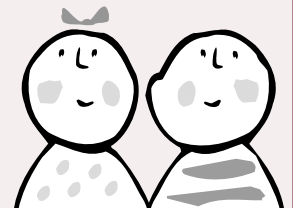
Eye Safety Awareness Week

**July 19 - 25, 2009**

National Youth Sports Week

**August 24 – 30, 2009**

National Safe at Home Week



educational component within our community and we look forward to future events.

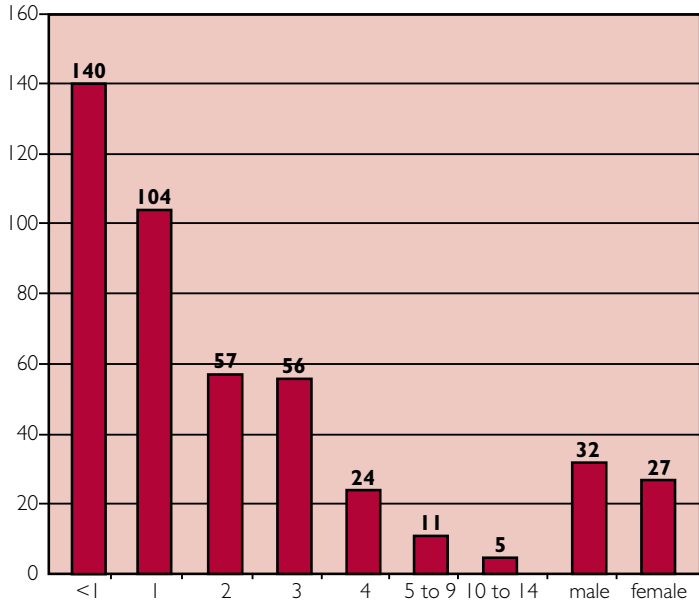
**Greater Naugatuck Valley 203-732-1337** supported by Griffin Hospital and the Valley Parish Nurse Program • **Greater New Haven 203-946-8186** supported by New Haven Health Department and Quinnipiac University, Occupational Therapy • **Greater Waterbury 203-709-3655** supported by St. Mary's Hospital and Waterbury Medical Association • **Litchfield County 860-626-8201** supported by Education Connection, Northwestern Connecticut Community College and Torrington Fire Department • **Windham County 860-456-6978** supported by Windham Hospital • **New London County 860-442-0733** supported by Lawrence & Memorial Hospital • **Fairfield County 203-853-7115**



# Nonfatal choking among children

Garry Lapidus, PA-C, MPH, Director, Injury Prevention Center, Connecticut Children's Medical Center; Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Public Health, University of Connecticut School of Medicine

**Rate (per 100,000) of nonfatal choking-related emergency department visits, by age, sex, U.S., 2001 (n=17,537)**



In 2001, an estimated 17,537 children <14 years were treated in emergency departments for choking-related episodes. Rates were highest for infants < 1 years (140) and decreased with age. The rate for boys (32) was similar to that for girls (27). Although the majority of patients were treated and released, 1,844 (10%) were hospitalized or transferred to a facility for a higher level of care.

Sixty percent of children choked on a food substance, 31% on a nonfood substance and 9% unknown. Candy/gum accounted for 19% of cases, and 13% choked on coins. Several injury prevention strategies can reduce the risk for choking in children, including public education, product-safety labeling, and changes in product design. Because complete removal of all choking hazards is unlikely, parents and caregivers should learn how to treat a child who is choking. •

Source: MMWR, 51(42);945-948.



NON 45  
Spring 2009

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