

# Messages from the CDOP



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Issue 2



Kirklees Safeguarding Children Board



Calderdale  
Safeguarding  
Children Board

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## The Child Death Overview Panel:

The death of any child is a tragedy. It is vital that all child deaths are carefully reviewed. This is so that we can learn as much as possible from them, in order to better support families and to try to prevent future deaths.

This newsletter is designed to raise awareness of the work of the Calderdale and Kirklees Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) and to bring news on ongoing campaigns.

### Socket Covers

The Panel's attention has been drawn to conflicting advice circulating about risks relating to the use of socket covers to prevent children putting their fingers in the socket.

Modern 13 amp plug sockets have a shutter mechanism, which prevents access to the live connectors. Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) recommends that small children are warned to keep away from electrical equipment until they are capable of understanding the risks and are able to use it safely. RoSPA does not consider it necessary to recommend the use of socket covers.

Source: RoSPA Home Safety Position Statements September 2014

<http://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/home-safety/rospa-home-safety-position-statements.pdf>

Below is a link to the CAPT website, which has some useful information about electrical safety and children: -

<http://capt.org.uk/safety-advice/keeping-children-safe-electric-shocks>



## Why are Button Batteries Dangerous?

Button batteries and lithium coin batteries are the small, round batteries you find in lots of toys and everyday objects. They can be extremely dangerous for children if swallowed – especially lithium coin batteries –and can kill within hours.

If a button battery gets stuck in the throat or gullet, energy from the battery can make the body create caustic soda (the chemical used to unblock drains!). This can burn a hole through the throat and lead to serious internal bleeding and death.

It's not just babies and toddlers, who put everything in their mouths, who are at risk from button batteries. Older children can be fascinated by them too. In some cases, they may deliberately put a button battery in their mouth or on their tongue to experience the sensation of the electrical charge.

## How can I keep children safe?

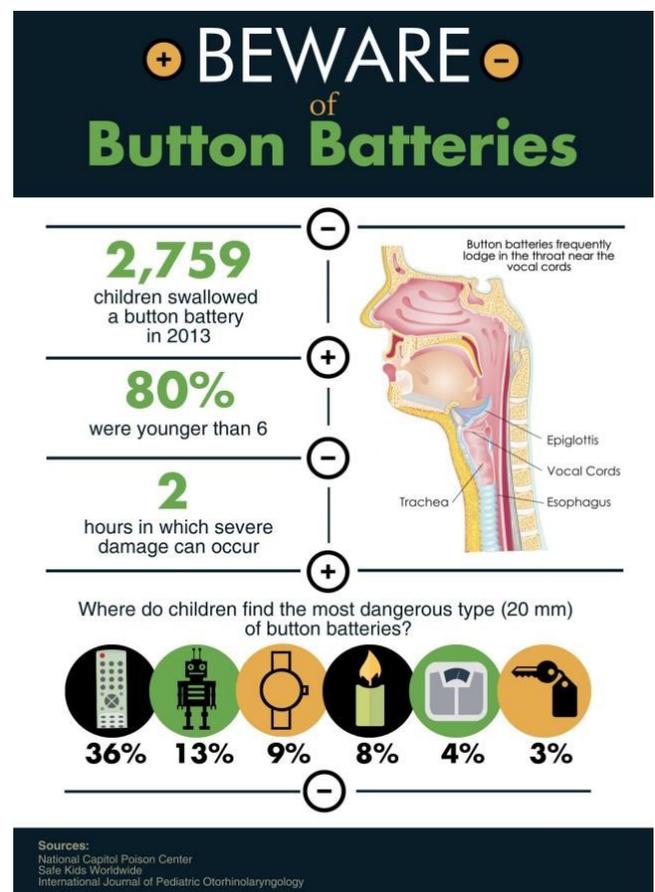
- Keep products with batteries well out of reach if the battery compartment isn't secured with a screw.
- Keep all spare batteries out of children's reach and sight, ideally in a high-up, lockable cupboard.
- Avoid toys from markets or temporary shops as they may not conform to safety regulations.
- Teach older children that button batteries are dangerous and not to play with them or give them to younger brothers and sisters.
- Remember that even used batteries can be dangerous, so recycle them safely.

## If an accident happens

Unfortunately it may not be obvious that a battery is stuck in a child's throat. They may be breathing normally, or simply develop cold or flu-like symptoms.

If you suspect your child has swallowed a button battery, act fast.

- **Take them straight to the A&E department at your local hospital or dial 999 for an ambulance.**
- Tell the doctor there that you think your child has swallowed a button battery.
- Do not let your child eat or drink
- Do not make them sick.
- Do not wait to see if any symptoms develop.



# Can you save an unborn life today?

At CDOP we are constantly looking at the things that cause child deaths and what we can do to prevent them happening in the future. Although it's not technically in our remit, we also take a broader review in terms of looking at things that also cause stillbirths and disability in children. One of the key factors that we find comes up again and again is smoking in the household, particularly by the mother but also by their partner and others in the household too.

Smoking whilst pregnant increases the chances of having a miscarriage or stillbirth. It also increases the chances of cot death (SIDS) by at least 25 per cent. Babies born to women who smoke during pregnancy are, on average, much smaller than those born to women who don't smoke. Low birth weight is one of the main causes of illness and disability in babies, and also increases the risk of a baby being stillborn. Second-hand smoke can also reduce birth weight and increase the risk of cot death.

Smoking during pregnancy may also mean that babies are more likely to suffer from certain birth defects. There's a strong link between smoking in pregnancy and babies born with a cleft lip and palate. Children whose mums smoked during pregnancy are also more likely to suffer from wheezy coughs. Smoking whilst pregnant could even affect a child's mental development and behaviour, leading to a short attention span and hyperactivity.

## Here's where you come in...

The biggest difference frontline practitioners can make to improve the health of the unborn child in a smoker is to help them to quit. Anyone who has been a smoker and given up knows how hard it is – but knows it is possible too. If you highlight the support that is out there, that might be all they need to take action. Signpost them to NHS stop smoking services at <http://yorkshiresmokefree.nhs.uk/> for more information and advice, or suggest they call 0800 612 0011 to speak to someone about quitting. And remember, it's not just about mum...it's about the rest of the family too!

## Is Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) safe in pregnancy?

NRT can be used during pregnancy to help stop smoking, and is a lot safer than smoking. NRT contains only nicotine and none of the damaging chemicals found in cigarettes. It helps by giving nicotine when someone would otherwise have had a cigarette.

NRT can be prescribed during pregnancy by a GP or an NHS stop smoking adviser. Or it can be bought over the counter without a prescription from a pharmacy.

## What about e-cigarettes?

Pregnant women who find it difficult to stop smoking are recommended to use licensed nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) products. However if a pregnant woman makes an informed choice to use an e-cigarette and if that helps them to stay smoke-free, they should not be discouraged. Little is known about the long-term effects of e-cigarette use, let alone in pregnancy. They may be safer than tobacco, but they may also still harm an unborn child.



## Safety Messages

**Other ongoing safety issues** Nationally, CDOPs have recently been raising awareness of risks associated with:

- ◆ Choking on foods such as grapes, popcorn, cherries, nuts, bananas and mashed potato
- ◆ Suffocation on nappy sacks
- ◆ Poisonings from cleaning products and pharmaceuticals
- ◆ Co-sleeping on beds, sofas and other furniture
- ◆ Bath seats
- ◆ Consanguinity (having parents who are blood related)
- ◆ Suicide



**SAVE THE DATE:**  
**Calderdale and Kirklees**  
**Safeguarding Week:**  
**17th to 23rd October 2016**

Look out for the events, activities, training and drop-ins advertised locally. Block out space in your diary now. If you want to get involved—contact your relevant Safeguarding Board on the contact details below.

## Safeguarding Children Board Contacts

### Kirklees

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## Websites and links to further Information

Auntie Pam's

<http://auntiepams.org.uk/who-are-we/>

Forget Me Not Children's Hospice

[www.forgetmenotchild.co.uk/](http://www.forgetmenotchild.co.uk/)

Child Accident Prevention Trust

[www.capt.org.uk/?gclid=CKrImZziu8UCFeiWtAodWmwAnw](http://www.capt.org.uk/?gclid=CKrImZziu8UCFeiWtAodWmwAnw)

Lullaby Trust (bereavement support)

[www.lullabytrust.org.uk/](http://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/)

National CDOP contacts

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-death-overview-panels-contacts](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-death-overview-panels-contacts)

Every Baby Matters Leaflet (health and safety advice for parents)

[www.calderdale-scb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/every-baby-matters.pdf](http://www.calderdale-scb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/every-baby-matters.pdf)