

Ask Jon Eakes

Child safety kits for horizontal blinds

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In November of 2000 there was a massive North American recall of horizontal blinds that presented potential strangulation danger for small children. The problem blinds had long hanging cords that were looped at the bottom, and for some it was the central cords that could be pulled forward and a kid could get tangled up in them. In the Fall of 2009 the US actually extended their recall to almost all blinds with hanging cords. U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission - see Roman shades & blinds. Reportedly the massive recall was found necessary after the CPSC tracked 16 near strangulations in addition to 5 fatal strangulations. Millions of products have already been recalled by brand, but this final recall has a much wider scope and incorporates the roman blind/shade regardless of brand distinctions. Take a look at your blinds and if you see that they pose either of these dangers, you'll need to take precautions. The first safety step is to keep baby cribs and play pens away from any horizontal blinds so that the baby cannot pull any of the cords into their area. On this TV show segment we showed little gadgets that allow you to tie the cords up high to prevent the centre cords from being pulled out, and a "safety separation device" that eliminates the loop in the bottom of the cords -- if you put pressure on the cord, it pops open. All of these things are available throughout North America, many for free, from the Child Safety Association -- www.SafeKid.org. One pro-active blind company is in the forefront of providing both information and products related to child safety and blinds of all kinds: www.BlindsChalet.com.

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