

Consumer Product Safety Alert

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Children Still Suffocating with Plastic Bags

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has received an average of about 25 reports a year describing deaths to children who suffocated due to plastic bags. Almost 90 percent of them were under one year of age. Recent reports often describe bags originally used for dry cleaning or storage. Some may have been used to protect bedding and furniture, and others just were not carefully discarded.

Most dry cleaning bags and some other plastic bags bear a voluntary label such as:

“Warning: To avoid danger of suffocation, keep this plastic bag away from babies and children. Do not use this bag in cribs, beds, carriages or playpens. The plastic bag could block nose and mouth and prevent breathing. This bag is not a toy.”

The CPSC has reports of children suffocating with plastic bags in cases like these:

- Child pulled plastic dry-cleaning bag over face while lying on adult bed.
- Plastic garbage bag (filled with clothes) fell over victim’s face and mouth while victim was on adult bed.
- Child crawled into plastic garbage bag.
- Child rolled off mattress onto plastic bag filled with clothes.
- Child slept on mattress covered by plastic bag.

Never put children to sleep on or near plastic bags.

Children have suffocated when plastic bags (usually dry-cleaning, garbage, or trash bags) have blocked the nose and mouth and prevented breathing.

Keep plastic bags away from children.

