



Tips for Working with the Training Dolls:

There are two things that you may run into with the dolls that will hinder your participants' success with the hands-on portion of their Heimlich Heroes™ training.

In either case, first, make sure your hands are properly fistled and wrapped. That way you are squeezing in and up (like a 'J' stroke) just an inch or two above the navel, but still below the ribcage edge. Give it a long hard squeeze against your body – as if you are trying to lift the doll.

1. The foam will not expel from the mouth

The purple foam is pretty dense. Sometimes it is very difficult for the foam to be expelled from the doll's mouth. If you run into this challenge, try these tips:

- a. It's best to squeeze the foam, on the long sides, before placing it in the mouth. This makes it a little less tight and it will come out a little easier.
- b. If still unsuccessful at expelling the foam, administer the Heimlich Maneuver® in the unconscious position a few times before trying again in the upright position (see video).
- c. Use the same piece of foam over and over for your group, until it becomes too easy to expel. If it's too easy to expel, training impact is reduced.
- d. A package of 30 foam pieces can be easily be used for 100-150 participants.

2. The doll may shift

Students in the younger elementary grades are especially vulnerable to this issue. The doll is almost the same size as they are and they may not yet have the arm strength to hold and squeeze at the same time. If this is the case, try these ideas:

- a. Make sure the student is starting the maneuver with their hands against the body – do not need to put hands out straight and come into the diaphragm hard. Just do a long steady squeeze as mentioned above.
- b. You can also have the student stand with one foot a small step forward. This allows the body of the doll to be supported a little bit by their leg.
- c. If that is still not helping, the leader should help by holding/steadying the doll while the student practices. The leader should be facing the doll and student and will basically just keep the doll from slipping and shifting

These tips will help you and your students. But please contact us if you are still having difficulty after applying these techniques.

Note: Young children – especially those under the age of seven – often do not have the strength to perform the Heimlich Maneuver in the upright position. They may, however, be able to perform the maneuver in the unconscious position.