

Heimlich Heroes plans to double the program's child trainees in 2016



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Heimlich Heroes has trained more than 25,000 kids in 37 states since its debut in 2013 and plans to double that number by the end of 2016.

The **interactive educational program** is an effort to equip the next generation with the Heimlich maneuver. Four known trainees have saved lives after participating in the program, says Terri Huntington, program manager.

The program allows for real-life application of the Heimlich maneuver, which requires trainees to practice on a specially made training doll. The training is

created so teachers, nurses and leaders can facilitate using a video in a variety of environments.

“We’ve created this training-in-a-box that makes it easy to learn three important things in one hour,” Huntington says. “It teaches them to recognize the signs of choking, learn how to minimize that risk and how to respond in a choking emergency.”

Development for the program came from the help of the [Deaconess Foundation](#) and [The Heimlich Institute](#) in 2012. The program was first piloted in 2013.

Heimlich Heroes works with schools and youth organizations like the [YMCA](#), [Boys & Girls Clubs](#) and different scouting organizations to increase their reach.

The program teaches trainees as young as 7 years old. Why so young? Most kids don’t learn the life-saving skill until junior high or sometimes high school.

“You just never know when it’s going to happen,” Huntington says. “Kids are learning this skill and hoping they don’t have to use it, but now they have the confidence to really step in and act if they do see that kind of emergency and save someone’s life.”

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