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# Program teaches kids the Heimlich Maneuver

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FRESNO., Calif. (KFSN) --

Life can quickly change when someone begins to choke, but how many of us know the Heimlich?

A national program is spreading this knowledge here in the valley, especially to kids. "About 5,000 people die from choking every year," Terri Huntington with Heimlich Heroes explained. "And it's really the fifth largest cause of accidental death in the United States."

Huntington is with the program in Ohio. She made a stop in Fresno to bring their training in a box to valley schools and organizations. "They may be on the playground," Huntington said. "They may be in the cafeteria at lunch, they met at a dinner with friends and there might not be any adults around."

When it comes to choking, every second counts. Huntington showed us the key steps to performing the Heimlich. "As you go around, you feel for that belly button to just under the ribs and then you squeeze in and up, squeeze in and up," she said.

Huntington even switched roles with one of our ABC30 employees. "I can feel the air coming out of my lungs like that," she said. "I can feel pressure there's pressure there."

[VIDEO: How to do the Heimlich Maneuver](#)



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By learning this you may save a life one day.

For children one year and older, you use a similar method with your fingers but for babies, you need to lay them down. "You can use two fingers from each hand rather than a fist, but as soon as that object starts to come out," she said. "You roll them to their side so they don't aspirate."

Huntington says using the Heimlich is the best bet for helping clear a person's airway, but she cautions people to remain calm in a tense situation. "One of the most common mistakes is they will come up when a person is coughing still and they'll come and pat them on the back," she explained. "Thinking that will help but really doing that will make whatever's caught, go a little deeper."

Deaconess Foundation of Ohio provides the kits for free as a way to honor Dr. Henry Heimlich, who worked with the hospital.

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