Blind cords: Preventing tragedy

The following scenarios related to blind cord accidents are based on true stories. Consider the scenarios and discuss blind cords in the home and steps to take to make them safe.

17 month-old died after being tangled in a blind cord that dangled into her cot

A seventeen-month old baby sits in her cot. She is safe whilst her mum is on the phone. She has a toy to occupy her and doesn't tend to climb. The blind cord must have dangled into the cot and somehow by the time her seven-year old brother discovers her, has been strangled. No one is exactly sure what happened but tragically, despite best efforts to save her, she is pronounced dead on arrival at the hospital.

After her death, her mum pleas:

“We did tie [our blind cords] up but not all the time. I’d just urge people to make sure they tie them up.”

21 month-old climbs onto a chair and gets tangled in blind cord

Practising his newly-acquired climbing ability, a toddler climbs onto a chair. The chair is by a window with a roller blind and the blind cord is hanging near the chair. The child is unsteady, loses his footing and falls from the chair, tangling his head and neck in the looped blind cord.

His parents said:

“He was so independent, he could work out from such a young age how to get to the things he wanted. We could just never have imagined this tragedy could have happened.”

17 month-old left watching a Peppa Pig video while the mum went to the toilet

A toddler was still in her pyjamas, she hadn't been out of bed long. She was watching TV whilst her mum went to the toilet. She was very happy and occupied and her mum was still talking to her as she left the room.
She must have put her head in the cord and spun herself around.

Her devastated mum admits:

"She was still in her pyjamas and watching Peppa Pig then she was just gone."

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**A two-year-old boy died just minutes after his neck got tangled in a roller blind cord**

The tragic accident happened as a toddler played with his older sister in the family playroom while his father and other children watched television in the adjacent room, and the door was left open. This was a normal family Saturday tea-time.

The father had just checked on the two children minutes before his daughter ran in and called on her daddy to "come quick", just as his mother arrived home from work.

It was initially thought that the toddler somehow climbed onto the windowsill. However, the father said in his evidence to the inquest that he didn't believe his son would have done that, as he was a "cautious, careful child".

"We will probably never know how exactly this happened. But we never knew him to climb up on the sill before."

The toddler’s parents performed CPR on their son until the rapid response paramedic arrived nine minutes later, but he had no pulse or heartbeat. He was taken to hospital was later pronounced dead.

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**16-month-old girl died after getting tangled in a cord of her grandparents’ window blinds.**

A toddler went into the conservatory of her grandparents’ home and was alone for just a few moments. She was found unconscious tangled in the cord. She was taken to hospital but never recovered.

"If anything can come out of this, it must be to warn other people"

Her parents said:

“Our world has been blown apart and will never be the same again. Bronwyn was so precious and had her whole life ahead of her."

“It was an accident but we are so keen to warn other people of the dangers. If anything can come out of this, it must be to warn other people to put safety catches on their blinds. If they have old blinds they must double check the cords are tied away or replace them with safety blinds.”

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For advice on blind cord safety go to [www.capt.org.uk/blind-cords](http://www.capt.org.uk/blind-cords)

#blindcordsafety