

MEDIA RELEASE

Commissioner of Consumer Affairs

26 October 2009

BLIND CORD DEATHS CAN BE PREVENTED

Following the accidental death of a two year old in Victoria recently, parents and carers are advised to check the safety of blind cords in their homes, businesses, and community group facilities.

“Thirteen deaths from blind cords in Australia in nine years is too many” Commissioner of Consumer Affairs, Gary Clements said. The latest death involved a toddler getting strangled by a window blind cord in their bedroom.

“Children up to six years of age have been victims of these tragic accidents” Mr Clements said.

As part of Children’s Week and in the lead up to National Kids Safe Day, Consumer Affairs is urging parents and carers to help prevent this happening again. “Any blind or curtain that has a looped cord poses a safety hazard to children”, Mr Clements said.

The Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, the Hon Delia Lawrie, implemented an NT ban in February this year on the supply of new window blinds without appropriate warning tags and safety devices. However there are potential dangers involved with unsafe blind and curtain cords already in homes and businesses.

Remember these simple steps to reduce the chance of another casualty.
Make sure:

- Children can’t reach blind or curtain cords
- Keep cots, high chairs and other baby furniture away from blind cords
- Children can’t climb up to reach blind or curtain cords
- Cords are wrapped around a cleat on the wall
- Vertical blinds have a cord tensioning device
- Cords are 1600mm above the bottom of the blind

Anyone who has concerns about blind cord safety should contact Consumer Affairs on 1800 019 319.

A Fact Sheet of frequently asked questions about the ban is located at:
http://www.nt.gov.au/justice/consaffairs/documents/Blind_Cord_2009_Fact_Sheet.pdf