FACT SHEET: Choking Hazards

Children under the age of 4 should not be offered foods that are round, hard, small, thick and sticky, smooth, compressible, dense, or slippery.  

EXAMPLES OF HAZARDOUS FOODS
- hot dogs (food that is the most common cause of choking) and other meat sticks, whole or sliced into rounds
- hard candy
- peanuts and other nuts
- seeds
- raw peas, raw carrot rounds
- hard pretzels or chips
- rice cakes
- whole grapes
- popcorn
- spoonfuls of peanut butter
- marshmallows
- chunks of meat larger than can be swallowed whole

Remember: Children should be seated and supervised while eating.

EASY WAYS TO MAKE FOODS SAFER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Kind of Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hot dog</td>
<td>Substitute a more nutritious food; if hot dogs must be served, cut them in quarters lengthwise, then cut the quarter lengths into small pieces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole grapes</td>
<td>Cut in half lengthwise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuts</td>
<td>Chop finely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw carrots</td>
<td>Chop finely or cut into thin strips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanut butter</td>
<td>Spread thinly on inch sized pieces of cucumber, fruit or bread mix with applesauce and spread thinly on bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish or meat with bones</td>
<td>Carefully remove the bones and cut into small pieces</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NON-FOOD CAUSES OF CHOKING
- latex balloons (the most common cause of a non-food item causing choking)
- small objects, toys, and toy parts (per Consumer Product Safety Commission, less than 1.25” in diameter and between 1” and 2.25” deep; some recommend a more stringent limit of keeping objects away from young children that have a diameter of less than 1.75”)