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Parents these days are pretty savvy folks – on all levels. Many of us can't imagine forgoing the latest technologies and devices that organize, simplify and enrich our lives.

We also find ourselves fearless and tireless when it comes to protecting our kids. We childproof our homes and would face down an army of blue monsters (and far worse) to ensure the safety of our little ones.

However, there is a hidden threat to young children many of us don't consider when pulling out that portable DVD player or other devices to entertain our kids. Inside many common items we use every day, such as mini remote controls, car key fobs, calculators, book lights and flameless candles, are shiny, coin-sized lithium batteries young children can easily access and swallow. Once ingested, these batteries can severely burn the esophagus in less than two hours, leading to a lifetime of serious health consequences, and in some cases death.

Current statistics on this issue are no less scary:

- In the United States alone, roughly 3,500 button battery swallowing cases are reported each year.
- Cases resulting in serious injury or death have more than quadrupled in the past five years, compared to the prior five years.
- Children ages 4 and under are most at risk.

However, as parents, we're not powerless here— we can control the battery. Last year my company, Energizer, joined with [Safe Kids Worldwide](#) to launch [The Battery Controlled](#) campaign to accomplish just this. Alongside more than 100 national and local partners, we've been working in communities nationwide to educate and arm parents and caregivers with information they need to keep kids safe.

And, there are many easy steps you can take today to ensure your children's safety, including:

- Looking around your home for any items that may contain coin-sized button batteries.
- Placing these devices out of sight and out of reach of small children.
- Keeping all loose or spare batteries locked away.
- Going to the emergency room immediately if you think your child has swallowed a battery.

I hope you'll consider sharing this lifesaving information with your family, friends, caregivers and sitters as well as visiting [The Battery Controlled website](#) to learn more about prevention measures, the campaign and how you can get actively involved. You can also follow us on [Twitter](#), catch us on [YouTube](#) and friend us on [Facebook](#).

Together we *can* make a difference in protecting children.

*More about Stacey Harbour- Stacey is a mother to a daughter aged 11 and son aged 9, and the director of marketing for U.S. batteries at Energizer. Her responsibilities include leading [The Battery Controlled](#) public education campaign and the company's efforts to help protect children from button battery ingestion. She also supports internal efforts to make battery packaging more child resistant and explores possible product improvements or modifications to eliminate or reduce injury to children. In her spare time, Harbour plays a vital role in helping one of the fastest growing churches in Missouri with its strategic long-range planning and development. She also serves on its Children's Ministry.*

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