



Department of Human Services' (DHS) Choking Prevention Website Now Available

ODP Announcement 25-070

AUDIENCE:

All stakeholders

PURPOSE:

This communication announces the release of the Department of Human Services' (DHS) Choking Prevention website.

DISCUSSION:

Per the National Foundation of Swallowing Disorders, individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities are significantly more likely to die from difficulty swallowing (dysphagia), choking and aspiration than people without those disabilities (2020). The Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) recognizes that choking is a critical issue that needs to be addressed across all care settings. ODP is committed to proactive prevention of choking events through enhanced education and resource development.

ODP is proud to partner with the Office of Long-Term Living (OLTL), the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS), and the Office of Medical Assistance Programs (OMAP) to announce the launch of the DHS Choking Prevention web page, a dedicated online resource hub aimed at preventing choking events among all Pennsylvanians. This new platform provides all interested stakeholders with a myriad of practical tools and educational materials to promote safer mealtime environments as well as how to recognize and respond to the potential safety risks for someone who has swallowing issues. This new website is a crucial step in ODP's continued efforts to

ensure safety, dignity and health for individuals with intellectual disability and autism. ODP encourages all interested stakeholders to visit the site and access the available resources to implement into daily use as needed. The [DHS Choking Prevention](#) webpage is now available.

CONTACT:

Questions about this communication should be directed to the appropriate ODP Regional Office.