

# Choking

## Note

If you see the telephone symbol (☎) next to any sign below occurring in the student, call for help (EMS/9-1-1, school nurse, first aid-trained staff).

## Look for

- ☎ Unresponsive
- ☎ Grasps at throat
- ☎ Cannot get the student to respond; student not able to follow directions or think clearly
- ☎ Inability to speak, breathe, cough
- ☎ Bluish, darkened facial color
- ☎ Sudden onset of weak, ineffective cough; high-pitched voice or breath sounds, gagging

## Listen for *statements about*

- Reports of laughing, talking, playing with food/foreign object in mouth.
- Student with known swallowing/chewing/breathing problems.

## Action

1. Give abdominal thrusts if student cannot cough, speak, or breathe.
2. If student is coughing, breathing, and continues to be able to speak, stay with the student and encourage coughing.
3. **Do not** reach into a conscious student's mouth.
4. If a nurse is unavailable, notify parents of incident occurring at school and need for prompt medical assessment.
5. If student loses consciousness, gently help to ground and begin CPR. Between chest compressions and rescue breaths, look into mouth and remove any visible object.

