

Teacher saves boy from choking at child care center



LEADER PHOTO BY SCOTT WILLIAMS

Teacher Mary Meyer, left, jumped into action when she realized that 3-year-old Andrew Behnke, right, was choking on his breakfast and could not breathe.

3-year-old swallowed strawberry whole

By Scott Williams

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A Shawano child care worker is being hailed as a hero after saving a 3-year-old boy who accidentally choked himself by swallowing a whole strawberry.

Andrew Behnke, who has a bad habit of wolfing down his food, stopped breathing and was in serious danger during breakfast Tuesday at Under the

Rainbow Child Care center, 1515 S. Lincoln St.

While Andrew struggled with the strawberry lodged in his throat, teacher Mary Meyer grabbed the frightened boy from behind and successfully performed the lifesaving Heimlich maneuver.

When Andrew's mother, Abby Behnke, later learned what had happened, she and Meyer shared an emotional embrace and shed a few tears

of joy together.

"She's my hero," Abby Behnke said. "She saved my child. I'm eternally grateful to her."

Meyer, 37, a mother of two, said her instincts took over when she realized that Andrew was choking on his breakfast. She used the first-aid training that she received before starting work at Under the Rainbow five years ago.

"You never know when you're going to need that,"

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