



Friday 8th May 2026



A note on naming: this alert deliberately names the products so that parents and school staff can identify them on shelves, in school bags, and in conversation with children. The toys are sold under names such as NEEDOH Toys, Squishies, Nice Cubes and Jelly Cubes among others. This is not a product recall. The toys are safe when used as intended. The danger is entirely caused by misuse encouraged by online videos.

Extraordinary email-Safeguarding Alert: Viral Squishies microwave trend causing burns

The Education safeguarding Advice Service for Schools has issued an urgent warning today regarding the above viral trend. Please read the information shared below

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Children and young people are microwaving squishy silicone toys after seeing online videos claiming this makes the toys softer and more pliable. When the toy is squeezed afterwards, it bursts and sprays boiling material, which reportedly has left children's hands and faces seriously burned.

- The toys are widely available in UK shops, and online stores including Amazon and TikTok Shop and are immensely popular for both children and young people.
- Often, the packaging for these toys provides a warning not to heat, freeze or microwave. Children are ignoring it because the online videos they watch encourage them to do the opposite. The child may no longer have the original packaging to even see the warning.
- The silicone casing insulates heat yet the outside stays cool to the touch, all while the inside reaches boiling temperatures.



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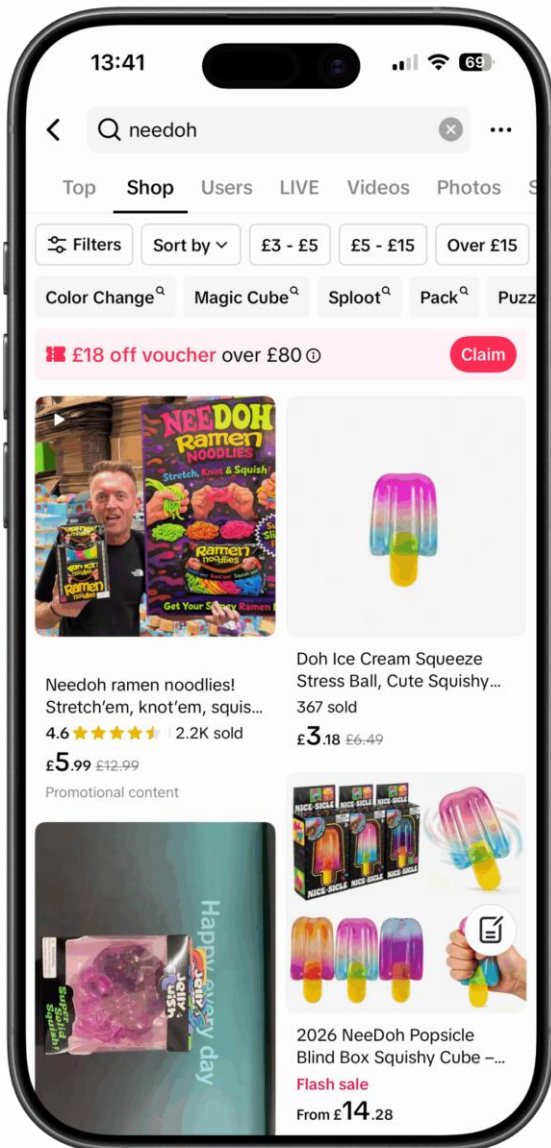
- In most reported cases, the child was unsupervised. There was no adult present to intervene before the injury occurred.

THIS IS NOT AN ISOLATED INCIDENT

Children have been seriously injured by this trend in the UK and the United States since 2025. Most recently, a 10-year-old girl in Bristol was seriously hurt and left with facial burns on 4th May 2026 after supposedly hearing about the trend from TikTok. Likewise, in the US, a seven-year-old required a medically induced coma and a nine-year-old narrowly avoided permanent vision loss. Hospitals in Chicago and Indiana treated multiple cases in a single week in February 2026. These are only cases that have reached public attention but evidently this is an active online trend which appears as an innocent 'life hack' (a simple technique for making everyday things easier) for children but carries serious risk.

PLATFORM RESPONSE

At the time of writing, we cannot verify that platforms have taken appropriate action to remove these videos or provide content warnings. Instead, TikTok, Instagram and YouTube continue to surface this content and searches for "needoh microwave" continue to return results. However, there is now an increase in videos detailing the news reports and safety warnings surrounding the trend.





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DANGERS

- ⚠️ Second and third-degree burns to the face, hands and neck.
- ⚠️ Blistering and skin peeling.
- ⚠️ Permanent facial scarring and potential lifelong disfigurement.
- ⚠️ Risk of eye damage or vision loss if boiling gel contacts the eyes.
- ⚠️ Medically induced coma in the most extreme cases.

ADDITIONAL RISK FACTORS

- > The toy shows no external sign of heat before it bursts, so there is no warning.
- > The content is designed to look like helpful advice and fun. Children who see it are highly likely to copy it.
- > Popularity of the toys on social media means the algorithm is more likely to push this content to young people.
- > The toy's increased popularity at schools can lead to conversations where one child recommends this 'life hack' to another, making even children who do not have social media aware of the trend.
- > Due to the numerous varieties of these toys and squishies, children may seek to microwave these too and it is unknown how other versions of these toys could react.
- > When used as intended, the toys are harmless and child-friendly. Children may not fully understand the risks of microwaving them or the harm it could cause. This is why some children will not ask an adult for permission or help beforehand.

