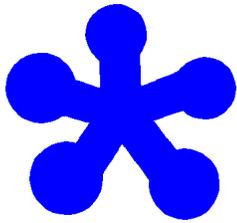


Play It Safe!

Tips on Toys



For
Parents
Families
Schools
Anyone Who
Cares About
Children

Toy safety is more than child's play.



Each year, more than 100,000 kids get hurt by their toys. Some are badly hurt. Some even die. These injuries don't have to happen.

Here are a few simple things you can do to make sure they don't.

Kids Will Be Kids
Even the smartest kids behave like children.

They put everything they can grab into their mouths, their noses, their eyes and their ears.

They don't know that sharp edges or pointed objects can hurt.

Or that small things like marbles, rubber bands, batteries, a teddy bear's eyes, or a doll's button can choke them.

Or that electricity can burn and shock them.

It's up to us to protect them-when buying toys, at home, and in our communities.

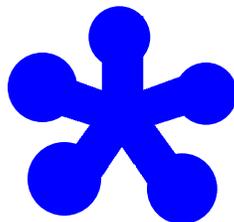
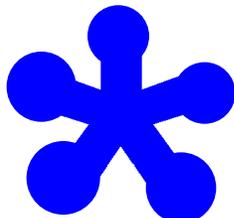
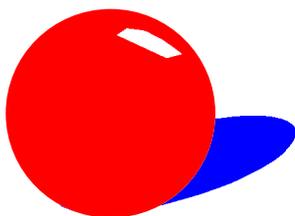
Do You Know How
Many Injuries Are
Associated With These
Common Playthings
Each Year?

Marbles	1,430
Balloons	1,557
Tricycles	11,496
Skateboards	27,454
Baby Walkers	27,662
Bicycles	453,376

Sources: Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates of toy-related injuries to children under 15 in 1992.

**In 1995, there were
853 gun-related
deaths of children
under 15.**

Courtesy of the National
Center of Health Statistics.



Play It Safe!

Buying Toys

How can I tell what's safe?

1. Pay Attention To Age Labeling-It's A Good Guide to Safety

Toys are often labeled according to ages of children who can use them safely. For instance, "For Ages

Three and Over" means that the toy is likely to have small parts on which young children can choke, sharp points or strings or elastics that can injure kids under three. It doesn't always mean that the toy is too advanced for your bright two-year-old.

2. Check Out Crib Toys

Kids can get tangled up-and even have their breathing cut off-by the strings of toys that are draped across a crib. Any toys with strings or elastic can be hazardous to young children.

3. Be Tough on a Toy Before Your Child Is

Small children have amazing skill in taking things apart.

- ▲ Make sure rattles are strong enough so they won't come apart.
- Test buttons, bells and stuffed-animal eyes to make sure they won't pull off.
- Squeeze toys should not have squeakers or whistles that can be pulled out.

4. Watch for Sharp Edges and Points

Kids love their toys. But they also love to throw them and leave them where they can fall on them. Avoid toys with glass or easily breakable plastic. They can become instant weapons.

5. Bike Helmets: Don't Leave Home

Without One

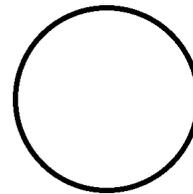
Bikes are toys too. In fact they are a major source of childhood injuries. A child old enough to ride needs a helmet. Buy a helmet to go with any bike you buy. Kids who ride along with you in bike seats should also wear helmets.

6. Darts, Lawn Darts, Projectiles, Air

Rifles...and Guns

These are so dangerous you should not even think of allowing them anywhere near kids.

How can I tell when small is too small?



1-1/4" Diameter

2-1/4" Long

The federal government has established a size for safe toys for kids under three. A small part should be at least the size of this standard- 1-1/4" in. diameter and 2-1/4" long. Any part smaller than these measurements are a potential choking hazard.

When you shop for a toy, make sure it has no parts smaller than these dimensions. Inexpensive, clear plastic tubes that parents can use to test small parts are available from stores specializing in children's toys and furnishings.

What if I have a problem with a toy?

Call: Consumer Product Safety Commission

TOLL -FREE HOTLINE
800-638-CPSC (2772)



Play It Safe!

At Home

What's most important to check?

1. Toy Chests
A lid that can fall freely when opened is dangerous. Make sure toy chests have durable lid supports that hold the lid open in any position and prevent it from slamming down on the back of a youngster's head or neck.

No toy chest should have a latch that might trap a child inside the chest. It should have ventilation holes for fresh air, just in case a curious toddler does climb inside.

2. Crib Gyms: Not For Older Babies
Take the crib gym down as soon as a child is able to get up onto hands and knees. Older babies who can move around can injure their necks on the gym bar.

3. Some Special Problems

▲ Balloons
Most people don't think of balloons as unsafe toys. But small children can easily choke on pieces of popped balloons or on uninflated ones.

◆ Riding Toys
Kids who are having fun on their trikes and other riding toys may veer into the street. Thousands of kids are injured every year when they ride their toys into traffic.

● Electrical Toys
Avoid them altogether for young children. They should be discouraged from playing with or near electricity.

■ Water Hazards
Never leave a child unattended, even for a moment, around a bathtub, swimming pool, or shallow-water play pool. Drownings can happen in a matter of seconds.

In the Community

What about toys I buy at yard sales?

Yard sales can be great places to pick up inexpensive toys. But a toy that can hurt is no bargain.

Avoid broken toys which may have sharp edges and points that weren't there when they were new. Used strollers, playpens, car seats, walkers and cribs may have missing parts or dangerously loose hardware.

Stay away from the old-style baby gates and corrals with diamond-shaped openings which can trap a child's neck.

Watch out for small parts that pull off. Particularly avoid used or hand-me-down toys for children under 3. Lots of older toys were made before there were safety standards.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS	
Doctor	_____
Poison Control Center	_____
Parent's Work Phones	_____
_____	_____
Rescue Squad	_____
Neighbor	_____
School	_____

A public service from the **Association of Trial Lawyers of America** and the **Johns Hopkins Injury Prevention Center**.

