

Play it Safe this Holiday Season!

The holidays are approaching and brings parties, family, friends, gift giving and, if you are a child, toys!

You may have recently heard in the news about toy recalls regarding specific types of toys and safety hazards concerning materials used to create and decorate them. It's important to make sure that any toy offered to a child is free from toxins that can cause them harm. All toys have age appropriate levels, too.

Follow the guidelines offered inside to help ensure a safe and happy season for all of the young ones on your list.

Resources

World Against Toys Causing Harm, Inc. (W.A.T.C.H.), a Massachusetts-based charitable non-profit corporation, publishes an annual "10 Worst Toys" list of toys identified with the potential to cause childhood injuries, and even death (www.toysafety.org/).

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

If there is ever a question regarding safety of a toy and if it has been recalled, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission issues toy hazard recalls including choking, laceration and other hazards not only limited to poisoning on their website at www.cpsc.gov.

National Poison Control Center

For more information regarding poisoning symptoms and action to take if you suspect exposure, call the center at 1-800-222-1222 from anywhere in the U.S. You can ask the experts any questions on poisoning; it does not have to be an emergency to call this number.



Center for Health & Hygiene in the Home & Community

The Center for Health and Hygiene in the Home and Community serves as a national and international resource for information and education, applied research, professional training and conferences. The Center focuses on issues relating to hygiene and infection control in areas such as:

- consumer food safety
- home hygiene
- daycare
- preschool
- homecare
- sports and leisure activity
- travel and hospitality

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Toy Safety
and Hygiene



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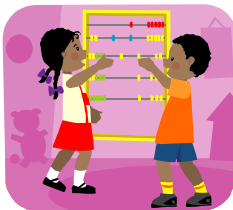
Toy Safety Tips

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission issues a list of Safe Shopping Tips every year to assist consumers with their purchasing decisions. The products in the Top Safe Shopping Tips for this year are:

- Magnets – For children under age six, avoid building sets with small magnets. If swallowed, serious injuries and/or death can occur.
- Small Parts – For children younger than age three, avoid toys with small parts, which can cause choking.
- Ride-on Toys – Riding toys, skateboards and in-line skates go fast and falls could be deadly. Helmets and safety gear should be sized to fit.
- Projectile Toys – Projectile toys such as air rockets, darts and sling shots are for older children. Improper use of these toys can result in serious eye injuries.
- Chargers and Adapters – Charging batteries should be supervised by adults. Chargers and adapters can pose thermal burn hazards to children.
- Keep toys clean to minimize the spread of germs—follow the manufacturer's instructions for machine or hand-washing.

Choose Appropriate Toys

It is also important that the toys chosen are appropriate for the children you are buying them for. Look for labels that give age and safety recommendations and use that information as your guide. Make sure that the instructions for use and assembly are followed. Select toys that suit the age, ability, skills and interest levels of the child you are buying for. The American Academy of Pediatrics offers helpful list of toys for any age.



Newborn to 1-year-old baby

Choose brightly-colored, lightweight toys that appeal to the baby's sight, hearing and touch.

- Cloth, plastic or board books with large pictures
- Large, unpainted blocks of wood
- Pots and pans
- Rattles
- Soft, washable animals, dolls or balls
- Bright, movable objects that are out of baby's reach
- Busy boards

1- to 2-year-old toddler

Toys for this age group should be safe and be able to withstand a toddler's curious nature.

- Cloth, plastic or board books with large pictures
- Sturdy dolls
- Musical tops
- Nesting blocks
- Push and pull toys (remember - no long strings)
- Stacking toys
- Toy telephones (without cords)



2- to 5-year-old preschooler

Toys for this age group can be creative or imitate the activity of parents and older children.

- Books (short stories or action stories)
- Blackboard and chalk
- Building blocks
- Crayons, nontoxic finger paints, clay
- Hammer and bench
- Housekeeping toys
- Outdoor toys: sandbox (with a lid), slide, swing, playhouse
- Transportation toys (tricycles, cars, wagons)
- Tape or record player
- Simple puzzles with large pieces
- Dress-up clothes

5- to 9-year-old child

Toys for this age group should help the child develop new skills and creativity.

- Blunt scissors, sewing sets
- Card games
- Balls
- Bicycles with helmets
- Crafts
- Electric trains
- Paper dolls
- Jump ropes
- Roller skates with protective gear
- Sports equipment
- Table games

Toy Recalls—What Can You Do?

A recent hot topic in toy safety has been the subject of lead used in the manufacturing and decoration of toys. Lead in U.S. consumer products was banned in 1978, however the use of the global marketplace for manufacturing has made it difficult to regulate every product the U.S. imports.



Lead-based paint tends to be brighter and last longer on products and is less expensive to use than other paint. Small children can ingest this paint by chewing on items painted with it. Lead exposure and can lead to a variety of health problems in young children including reduced IQ, learning disabilities, developmental delays, reduced height, and impaired hearing. At higher levels, lead can damage a child's kidneys and central nervous system and cause anemia, coma, convulsions and even death.

There are several organizations help make consumers aware of recalls, take look under the resources section of this brochure for more information.