



A nonprofit organization
dedicated to protecting children by
improving children's product safety

For Immediate Release
March 6, 2006

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Record number of unsafe cribs pulled from shelves in 2005 KID supports stronger regulation of children's products

(CHICAGO) Imagine children's necklaces laced with lead, folding chairs that amputate fingertips, cribs that strangle, child carrier straps that break - dropping your child to the ground or pacifiers that fall apart in a baby's mouth. These are just some of the products recalled in 2005 according to a study released today by Kids In Danger (KID), a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting children by improving children's product safety.

KID released *Dangers at Play: Children's Product Recalls in 2005* at a Chicago press conference, along with U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (IL-9), Amy Zimmerman, Children's Policy Advisor for Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan and Sessy Nyman of Action for Children. The report found that children's product recalls by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) increased 40% over 2004 levels. The number of 2005 recalls exceeded those in 2001, the previous high this decade, and twenty-two manufacturers recalled two or more children's products in 2005. Almost 28 million items were recalled, including nine recalls that involved one million or more units.

"Each year it is the same story," stated Nancy Cowles, executive director of KID. "Repeat offenders, clear violations of federal regulations, injuries and deaths from products that came to market without adequate testing and stayed on the market for way too long after their hazards were known to the company. This year there were millions of hazardous products in homes, schools, and childcare and most of them will never be recovered. It is time for action."

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Additional findings of the report include:

- Nine recalls involved a million or more units. The two largest recalls were for toy jewelry, which contained high levels of lead. Children's folding chairs accounted for three of the top ten product recalls in 2005. There were five recalls of similar children's folding chairs in 2005, which involved entrapment, fall, laceration, and amputation hazards.
- Twenty-two manufacturers recalled more than one product in 2005. This is up from just eight in 2004. Pottery Barn Kids, Wal-Mart, and J.C. Penney led the industry with four recalls each.
- Bodily injury—lacerations, falls, bruising—was the most common hazard from these products involving 43% of all children's product recalls.
- As in previous years, Graco had the highest number of incidents and injuries reported before recalls were issued. There was a significant rise in both the number of incidents reported before recall as well as the number of products with more than 100 incidents prior to a recall.
- Crib recalls hit an all-time high this year, and one child died after becoming entrapped between the mattress and the footboard of his Simplicity Aspen 3 in 1 Crib and suffocating. There were 14 other reports and 5 injuries prior to this recall and death.

"Kids In Danger is joined here today in announcing the report findings by elected officials and organizations that have stepped up to address this problem of unsafe products," stated Cowles. "We urge CPSC, manufacturers and retailers to work with us to reduce the number of dangerous products making it to market and make it more likely that recalled products will be taken out of homes and childcare facilities."

Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky (Il-9) spoke of her legislation that would require premarket safety testing of durable infant and children's products prior to sale.

"It is tragic that every year more and more children are injured from recalled children's products," Attorney General Madigan said. "KID's report is a must read for parents, child care providers and all policy makers. In Illinois, the Children's Product Safety Act requires manufacturers and retail merchants to proactively notify consumers of children's product recalls. This notification mechanism is vital to protecting children

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after a recall takes place. This report also provides important recommendations that will help protect our children, including a call for Congress to enact pre-market testing of juvenile products.”

KID recommends:

- Congress take an active role in ensuring safe products by supporting the Infant and Toddler Durable Product Safety Act and requiring pre-market testing of juvenile products.
- CPSC report annually to Congress on recall effectiveness.
- States should enact legislation to ban the sale of recalled products or their use in childcare facilities. Only seven states, including Illinois, now have a Children’s Product Safety Act.
- CPSC should adopt the provisions of Illinois’ Children’s Product Safety Act that mandate internet and retail posting of recall notices.
- Parents check the products used with their children at www.cpsc.gov and sign up for safety updates at www.KidsinDanger.org.
- In addition, parents should report problems with a product both to the manufacturer and the CPSC and urge elected representatives to push for better regulation of children’s products.

"CPSC has to work harder to connect with child care providers to ensure that children in their care are safe and protected," continued Sessy Nyman VP of public policy and government relations at Illinois Action for Children. "We especially need to establish better links to those providers who are isolated and need to know which products are not safe."

More information about Kids In Danger and dangerous juvenile products is available at (312) 595-0649 or www.KidsInDanger.org