



IMPROVING  
CHILDREN'S  
PRODUCT  
SAFETY

## Public Opinion on Children's Product Safety

**THE STUDY:** Recently Kids In Danger (KID), a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving children's product safety, studied how and why people respond to children's product recalls. A few key findings can be found below.

### THE FINDINGS:

#### ***The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)***

The CPSC does not have the same name-recognition as other similar federal agencies, such as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

- Only 47% of parents in the sampling were somewhat familiar with CPSC
- Very few participants knew about key services provided by the CPSC, such as the online product recall database at [cpsc.gov](http://cpsc.gov).

#### ***Product Recall Announcements Overwhelming***

Respondents found product recall announcements to be overwhelming and preferred a compact message with important information easily found. There were three vital questions that recalls should answer more clearly:

- What is being recalled?
- What danger does this product pose to my child?
- What should I do if I have the product?

***"I'm inundated with information. I just want to make a fast determination if this is related/pertinent to me."***

#### ***Actions Taken After Recall***

After hearing of a product recall, the participants listed three main factors in determining how they would respond. These factors include: the type of product, the risk involved with the recall, and the financial investment made in the original product.

- Of those responding, 45% said they would be less likely to respond if a company instructed them to destroy or discard the product without compensation.
- Consumers are more likely to respond to product recalls when companies take responsibility for their recalled product and issue refunds, store credit, or replacement products.
- Consumers are much less likely to attempt to fix a product's failings with company issued kits themselves for fear that they maybe held responsible for future safety issues.

***"When I have gotten rid of something dangerous I feel empowered."***

### ***Miscellaneous Findings***

Older children may be at increased risk due to some misconceptions.

- As their children grow older, participants were less worried about product safety as their children became more and more self-sufficient.
- There seems to be less information readily available for products geared towards older children.

Taken together, these two responses could be contributing to mistaken public beliefs that older children are at little to no risk of injury from product hazards.

Grandparents play an important role in protecting children from dangerous projects.

- Three-quarters (73.8%) of participants sampled had grandparents involved in the care of their children.
- Grandparents are responsive to information that they could share with their children - to be partners on product safety.

***“I will watch over my grandchildren and keep them safe. I don’t want to get unsafe products for them and I definitely do not want anything bad to happen to them ‘on my watch’.”***

### **THE RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Recall announcements should be brief and formatted to highlight content parents and caregivers look for first, including which product is recalled, what the hazard is, and what steps to follow if they own the recalled item.
- Safety information should be developed for older age groups to promote awareness of unseen product hazards and increase children’s safety.
- Grandparents should be included in children’s product safety outreach and education efforts.
- Manufacturers and retailers should consider the investment made by consumers and the type of hazards surrounding their products when deciding how to respond to a recall in order to ensure a greater response from consumers and minimize the dangers of unsafe children’s products.

**THE METHODOLOGY:** KID gathered responses to parents statewide in Illinois by publishing a questionnaire and distributing it via email and social media. The emails were sent to random households in Illinois with children under six. Responses from outside Illinois from social media were not included. Using the questionnaire results to frame the discussion, KID conducted two focus groups – one with mothers of children under 6 and one with grandmothers of children under six.

**KID plans to use these findings to improve product recall effectiveness and advance children’s product safety.**