



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

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Products including lead-laced charms and magnetic toys pulled from shelves in 2006 KID calls for stronger regulations

(CHICAGO) Most parents believe that someone, somewhere is making sure the products they're buying are safe. But a study released today of children's products recalled in 2006 shows that, unfortunately, this is not the case. Heart-shaped charms laced with enough lead to kill children, strollers with breaking handles, and pacifiers that detach in infants' mouths were just some of the children's products recalled in 2006.

Kids In Danger, a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting children by improving children's product safety, released with U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (IL-9) *Unexpected Danger: Children's Product Recalls in 2006*, an annual study of recalled children's products.

The report found that children's product recalls by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) in 2006 recalls reached the second highest levels in a decade. Almost 19 million items were recalled, including three recalls that involved one million or more units.

"These products together caused at least 177 injuries and 6 deaths," stated Nancy Cowles, executive director of Kids In Danger. "And those incidents include only those already reported at the time of the recall. More needs to be done to protect children from these hazards."

Additional findings of the report include:

- Toys constituted over half of recalled children's product recalls with over 17 million units. The two largest recalls were for toys containing small

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DON'T LEARN ABOUT RECALLS FROM YOUR BABY

magnetic parts, that, when swallowed, can attract, causing intestinal perforation, infection, and potentially fatal injuries. Mattel recalled 4.4 million Polly Pocket dolls and accessories after 170 incidents of magnets falling out of the toys and three serious injuries. Rose Art Industries' recall of 3.8 million Magnetix magnetic building sets was prompted, in part, by the death of a 20-month-old boy after swallowing magnets that came loose.

- Seven manufacturers recalled more than one product in 2006. Wal-Mart and Regal Lager led the industry with three recalls each.
- Bodily injury—lacerations, falls, bruising—was the most common hazard from these products involving 34% of all children's product recalls.
- Mattel's Polly Pocket dolls and accessories had 170 failure incidents before being recalled. The Learn-Around Playground Activity Center received the second highest number of reported incidents with 145 and the highest number of injuries with 54 caused by the design, which allowed a child's arm to become caught in the activity center's plastic tube.
- Lead was a top issue in 2006, with 17 recalls due to lead in children's products with a total of 2.6 million units recalled. Twelve of those recalls were for children's jewelry products.

“Lead was found in products from children's trinkets to high-end furniture to a toddler's flashlight,” stated Sarah Chusid, the report's author. “Given that it has been a known neurotoxin for at least 100 years, that is unacceptable.”

KID recommends:

- Children's products should come with product registration cards for the sole purpose of notifying consumers when a product has a defect or is recalled.
- CPSC should report annually to Congress on recall effectiveness, including numbers for individual recalls.

Unexpected Danger, Add 3

- 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. It is awaiting the governor's signature in New Jersey.
- Lead should be banned in any children's products. Manufacturers should have to certify that their paint, coatings, and metals are lead-free.

US Representative Jan Schakowsky (IL 9) announced that she will introduce legislation to address these concerns. She will be introducing the Infant and Toddler Durable Product Safety Act which requires mandatory safety standards and certified testing of children's nursery products along with the Danny Keysar Child Product Safety Notification Act to require registration cards for children's products. Danny's mother Linda Ginzel spoke at the press conference.

"Several years ago, I traveled to Washington to testify at a House Sub-Committee hearing on children's product safety," stated Ginzel. "I spoke of three steps CPSC could take *after a recall* that might have saved my son. One was a product registration card. There wasn't one with the crib that killed Danny. If there had been, Danny might be alive today. I am honored that Congresswoman Schakowsky listened that day and now is introducing legislation in Danny's name that might save another family from our grief."

KID recommends that 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.

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

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