



IMPROVING
CHILDREN'S
PRODUCT
SAFETY

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Contact: Nancy Cowles
(312) 595-0649

116 W. Illinois
Suite 4E
Chicago IL 60654
Phone: 312.595.0649
Fax: 312.595.0939
www.KidsInDanger.org

Safe Sleep, Safe Play: Children's Product Recalls in 2012

(CHICAGO) The number of children's product recalls continued to decline in 2012 to 97, the lowest number since 2004. At the same time however, the numbers of incidents (up 49%), injuries (up 42%) and deaths (up 200%) associated with those products rose dramatically from 2011.

Kids In Danger (KID), a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting children by improving children's product safety, released *Safe Sleep, Safe Play: Children's Product Recalls in 2012*, an examination of children's product recalls.

The report found that children's product recalls dropped, but incidents and injuries reported before recall rose. "We believe that the impact of new safety regulations can be seen in reduced recalls this year," stated Nancy Cowles, executive director of KID. "While recalls for unsafe cribs and toys with lead continued to drop, the numbers of injuries and incidents reported merits a closer look." The new requirements were part of the landmark 2008 Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA), a portion of which is named for Danny Keysar, whose parents founded KID. Children's product recalls in 2012 totaled over 13 million units, including two recalls that involved 2 million or more units.

"It is possible that SaferProducts.gov and other efforts have encouraged more reporting of incidents," continued Cowles. "But more analysis is needed of reports of injuries and incidents, to understand why so many injuries are sometimes involved before a product is removed from homes and childcare facilities."

SaferProducts.gov is the consumer incident database mandated by the CPSIA in 2008 and operational in 2011.

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“We’ve come a long way in our work to protect our children from dangerous products, but every year new hazards are discovered,” Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan said. “Through the work of Kids In Danger, parents and caregivers can stay informed of new risks and learn how to provide a safe environment and avoid tragedy.”

Additional findings of the report include:

- The number of children’s product recalls dropped 20% from 2011. For the first time since 2004, children’s product recalls numbered fewer than 100.
- A third of the recalls (31%) were for nursery products bought to be used with the most vulnerable consumers – infants and toddlers.
- One product, the Flexible Flyer Swing Set, had 1,232 reported incidents before consumers were alerted to the dangers through the recall.
- Eight children and one adult died prior to the recall of these products. This includes five deaths involving the Nap Nanny or Chill Infant Recliners. Other products involved in deaths were crib tents, travel beds, strollers, and an inflatable water slide which killed an adult.
- Sleep environment products continue to pose a significant hazard, with 7 deaths associated with these products.
- CPSC collected a total of \$3 million in fines for companies who violated safety regulations, mostly for failing to report hazards from products such as drawstrings, baby boats, and magnetic toy sets.

The report shows two trends. First, there are still manufacturers putting products that violate well-established standards into the marketplace. For instance, all but one of the 22 recalls of clothing items were for violating flammability standards, the small parts standard, lead paint standards or the CPSC prohibition on drawstrings – all of which have been on the books for decades. “Granted, these recalled products comprise a tiny fraction of the compliant clothing on the market,” stated Cowles. “But CPSC has sent a strong signal over the past few years with both recalls and fines that violations of these standards will not be tolerated. Companies should take action to eliminate these known hazards completely.”

The second, more troubling trend is products that are sold for use with very young children, but are not subject to any safety standards. For instance, the Nap Nanny and Chill Infant recliners, the PeaPod Travel Bed and Tots in Mind Crib Tents were sold for infant sleep and yet no standard covers these products. “Parents assume infant sleep products have been

tested for safety if they are on store shelves,” continued Cowles. “A few families paid the ultimate price to find out this was not true.” Seven children died in these products.

“Once again, KID’s annual recall report is providing critical analysis of the status of children’s product safety,” said US Representative Jan Schakowsky in a statement. “The year 2012 showed continued progress after passage of the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act, but also raised questions about ongoing safety standard violations and the high numbers of injuries and deaths prior to recalls. In my role as Ranking Member of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee which has jurisdiction over consumer product safety issues, I will be conducting oversight of the Consumer Product Safety Commission and working with KID to get answers to those questions.”

KID will continue to work both to support strong standards for the products covered by “Danny’s Law” and to assure that all products sold to care for children are covered by standards. In addition, KID continues to focus on recall effectiveness. It is not enough to recall dangerous products; more must be done to get them out of homes and child care facilities.

KID recommends that parents check the products used with their children at SaferProducts.gov for recalls and injury reports and sign up for safety updates at KidsInDanger.org. Accessing KID’s website on a mobile device allows consumers to search for recall information while shopping or considering a second-hand product. In addition, parents should report problems with a product both to the manufacturer and to CPSC at SaferProducts.gov, and urge elected representatives to make strong standards and recall effectiveness a priority.

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

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