



IMPROVING
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PRODUCT
SAFETY



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Consumer Advocates Applaud New Play Yard Standards to Prevent Infant Deaths and Injuries

WASHINGTON D.C. – Consumer advocates applaud CPSC’s vote today in support of new play yard standards that will protect children in the places they sleep and play.

Play yards, known as pack-n-plays or mesh portable cribs, are used in homes, for travel, and in child care homes across the country. CPSC has recalled about 20 different play yards involving millions of units since 1985.

The new standards were required as part of the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008 (CPSIA), legislation that enacted sweeping product safety reforms to prevent dangerous products from entering the marketplace. Section 104 of the CPSIA, known as the Danny Keysar Child Product Safety Notification Act, or Danny’s law, requires that CPSC promulgate mandatory standards for a number of infant and toddler durable products. This provision of the law was first introduced as a standalone bill by Representative Schakowsky in 2001. Last year’s strong crib standard and today’s play yard standard are two of the standards established as a result of this important law.

Danny’s law is named after Danny Keysar. Fourteen years ago, on May 12, 1998, Danny, who was 16 1/2 months-old was strangled at his licensed childcare facility in Chicago neighborhood. Danny was killed by a defective children’s product -- a mesh portable crib or play yard -- the Playskool Travel-Lite—where he napped in the afternoons at his childcare home. Danny’s parents, Linda Ginzel and Boaz Keysar founded Kids In Danger after Danny’s death to understand how this could have happened to Danny and to prevent other families from losing their children through addressing the flaws in the children’s product safety system. After Danny’s death, his family learned that 1.5 million portable cribs of similar collapsing, top-rail design by five manufacturers were sold and then recalled, but most remain unaccounted for today. As of today, the official death count from these play yards stands at 19 children. The most recent victim was killed in 2007 in Canada.

“Today’s action to put in place a mandatory standard for mesh cribs and play yards, even coming 14 years after our son’s death, means so much to us,” stated Linda Keysar, co-founder and President of Kids In Danger. “Had Congress only seen fit to pass Danny’s Law when Congresswoman Schakowsky first introduced it in 2001, imagine how many lives might have been saved. Had companies taken it on themselves to make sure they sell safe products, Danny might still be alive,” she concluded.

“We commend Chairman Tenenbaum and her agency for adopting a strong new mandatory standard for play yards,” stated Nancy Cowles, Executive Director of Kids In Danger. “CPSC staff worked tirelessly with members of the ASTM technical committee, including Kids In Danger and other consumer groups, to put together a rigorous standard that would assure the durability and safety of these products.”

While the standard represents a truly significant step in protecting children as they play and sleep in play yards, a last minute effort by juvenile product manufacturers eliminated a provision to address misassembly of the product which is known to be common and which has resulted in deaths.

“We are disappointed by the industry’s effort to remove this important provision,” stated Nancy Cowles. “We look forward to working with the CPSC to include an effective provision to address misassembly hazards in the near future.”

“Once again, the CPSC has stepped up to help make the marketplace safer for young children. We hope the agency addresses the missassembly issue to ensure that this tough new standard can become an even better one,” said Ellen Bloom, Director of Consumers Union’s Washington office.

“Due to the CPSIA, its Congressional supporters, and CPSC leadership, new play yards will now be meeting a new protective safety standard and will have to be tested to ensure compliance with the standard,” stated Rachel Weintraub, Director of Product Safety and Senior Counsel with Consumer Federation of America. “This will give parents and caregivers peace of mind that when they purchase a new play yard, their baby will be in a safe place.”

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The Consumer Federation of America is a nonprofit association of nearly 300 consumer groups that, since 1968, has sought to advance the consumer interest through research, advocacy, and education. www.consumerfed.org

Kids In Danger (KID) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting children by improving children’s product safety. KID was founded in 1998 by the parents of sixteen-month-old Danny Keysar who died in his Chicago childcare home when a portable crib collapsed around his neck. www.kidsindanger.org

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