



IMPROVING
CHILDREN'S
PRODUCT
SAFETY

Upholding the Law:

Online Retailers Continue to Sell Crib Bumper Pads Despite Bans in Chicago and Maryland

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Kids In Danger is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting children by improving children's product safety.

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Background

In 2012 [Chicago](#) became the first city to ban the sale of crib bumper pads. This ban followed [updated research](#) by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) on safe sleep. According to the AAP, it is [best for a baby](#) to sleep on its back and with a bare crib. Unnecessary items, such as bumper pads, blankets, or stuffed animals pose a suffocation, entrapment, or strangulation hazard. [Maryland soon followed](#), creating the first and only state-wide bumper pad ban.

Following the ban in Chicago, KID investigated to see if the ban was being enforced in retailers on-the-ground. KID program associates walked around Chicago to see if crib bumper pads were displayed in common retailers. The results were encouraging, of the 14 stores KID visited or called, only 3 displayed bumper pads or had them in stock.

Recently, the KID team decided to see if the ban was being upheld in online retailers. To test this, KID attempted to purchase crib bumper pads online and ship them to addresses in Chicago and Maryland. The results from this investigation are not as encouraging. Of the 33 online retailers we surveyed, 25 retailers (78.1%, or the vast majority) permitted us to order and ship bumper pads to addresses in both Chicago and Maryland. In this report we cover the methodology used, findings, and limitations to KID's investigation.

Methodology

KID began its investigation by identifying the major online retail stores that sell baby and nursery products, including crib bumper pads. In total, KID looked at 33 retailers in both Chicago and Maryland.

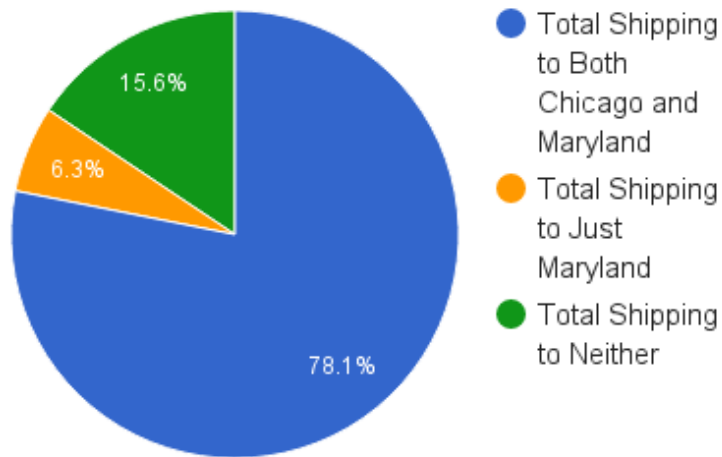
After identifying these retailers, KID program assistants attempted to buy and ship crib bumper pads to both Chicago and Maryland addresses. While KID did not actually purchase any crib bumper pads during the course of this investigation, we tested whether or not program assistants were permitted to enter shipping information and proceed to the payment information section.

Findings

The majority, 78.15%, of retailers permitted program assistants to proceed to the checkout page even with Maryland or Chicago shipping addresses. These included popular national retailers such as Kohl's and JCPenney. One retailer, All Modern, shipped to Maryland addresses but not to Chicago.

Only four retailers (15.6%): Bed Bath & Beyond, The Bedding Company, RH Baby & Child, and Wayfair prevented the sale of crib bumper pads to both Chicago and Maryland addresses. On the websites where the ban was upheld, users were stopped after entering their shipping information by alerts such as: "Due to restrictions in your state, these items cannot be shipped to you. You can change the shipping address or remove this item from your order."

Major retailers Target and Hayneedle did not sell crib bumper pads in any locations.



Limitations

KID encountered a few challenges that might limit the results shown here. On the webpages of some retailers, the shipping and payment information must be entered on the same page, making it so KID could not adequately test their policy without purchasing a crib bumper pad.

Another potential limitation is that of third-party sellers, such as Ebay, Amazon, or other resale websites. Retailers could bypass the law through these third-party sellers and still be selling crib bumper pads to areas where they are banned, even if their own websites might prohibit the sale.

Summary

The results of this investigation are greatly concerning to KID. It is not enough that a law is passed, the law must be enforced. While the 2013 on-the-ground research proved positive, with few retailers displaying and selling crib bumper pads, the recent investigation brings to light how this law is being bypassed by retailers through their online stores.

KID will continue to be an advocate for families and children and fight to enforce these laws. We will continue fighting for a national ban on crib bumper pads, which we believe is the only way to effectively remove these dangerous and unnecessary products from consumer's homes.

Addendum

Update January 2017 - After this investigation finished, on December 7th 2016, Ohio became the second state to ban non-mesh crib bumper pad sales. The law is set to go into effect on April 6th, 2017.

Update February 2017 - After reaching out to the companies we investigated, we received some updated information from the following companies:

- JCPenney no longer sells padded crib bumpers.
- Walmart no longer sells padded crib bumpers.
- Babies“R”Us / Toys“R”Us is reevaluating their policies to prevent purchase of and shipping to Chicago, Maryland and Ohio.