

For Immediate Release

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Toys...Fun Holiday Purchases: Making the right choices

According to the The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, shopping for toys during the holidays can be exciting and fun, but it can also be frustrating. There can be thousands of toys to choose from in one store, and it's important to choose the right toy for the right age child. Toys that are meant for older children can be dangerous for younger children. How can you protect your children when purchasing toys this holiday season?

Under 3 Years Old

- Children under 3 tend to put everything in their mouths. Avoid buying toys intended for older children which may have small parts that pose a choking danger.
- Never let children of any age play with un-inflated or broken balloons because of the choking danger.
- Avoid marbles, balls, and games with balls, that have a diameter of 1.75 inches or less. These products also pose a choking hazard to young children.
- Children at this age pull, prod and twist toys. Look for toys that are well-made with tightly secured eyes, noses and other parts. Avoid toys that have sharp edges and points.

Ages 3 Through 5

- Avoid toys that are constructed with thin, brittle plastic that might easily break into small pieces or leave jagged edges.
- Look for household art materials, including crayons and paint sets, marked with the designation "ASTM D-4236." This means the product has been reviewed by a toxicologist and, if necessary, labeled with cautionary information.
- Teach older children to keep their toys away from their younger brothers and sisters.

Ages 6 Through 12

- For all children, adults should check toys periodically for breakage and potential hazards. Damaged or dangerous toys should be repaired or thrown away.
- If buying a toy gun, be sure the barrel, or the entire gun, is brightly colored so that it's not mistaken for a real gun.
- If you buy a bicycle for any age child, buy a helmet too, and make sure the child wears it.
- Teach all children to put toys away when they're finished playing so they don't trip over them or fall on them.

READ THE LABEL

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission requires toy manufacturers to meet stringent safety standards and to label certain toys that could be a hazard for younger children. Look for labels that give age recommendations and use that information as a guide. Labels on toys that state "not recommended for children under three ... contains small parts," are labeled that way because they may pose a choking hazard to children under three. Toys should be developmentally appropriate to suit the skills, abilities and interests of the child.

For more Information log onto: The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Website:
<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/grand/toy/toysafe.html>