

Keeping Toy Time Safe Transcript

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Keeping toy time safe

Toys, toys, and more toys. With so many to choose from, it can be difficult to determine what is a safe toy for your child, and what is not.

In the first part of this presentation, we will cover some important facts, then review how you can keep your child safe when playing with toys.

Do you know?

Approximately how many children in the U.S. under the age of 14 die each year from a toy-related incident?

- 15
- 150
- 1,500

That's right! Although this number is low, even one is too many!

Fortunately, the actual number is 15. But even one is too many!

Facts

In the United States, more than 3 billion toys and games are sold annually.

Each year, approximately 217,000 toy-related injuries are treated in hospital emergency rooms.

Small balls and balloons account for many choking deaths.

Riding toys, including un-powered scooters and tricycles, are associated with more injuries than any other toy group.

In 2005, more than 58,000 children were treated in hospital emergency rooms due to injuries sustained from a riding toy.

For a comprehensive Fact Sheet, click on the Facts button.

Keeping Toy Time Safe Transcript

What can I do?

Let's face it, kids are all about playtime, which usually includes toys. Unfortunately, not all toys are safe choices for all children. There are many things you can do proactively to reduce the risk that your child will be harmed by playing with a toy - or art and craft supplies.

Toy recommendations

Each child is different. Knowing a bit about the child can help you choose the appropriate toys.

Four things can help you make your choice...

- Know the child.
- Know his age.
- Know his interests.
- Read the labels.

Age-appropriate toys

It's best if your child plays with toys that are appropriate for his age. Most toys have a minimum age level on the packaging. While this is the first step in choosing safe toys for your child, you may also want to consider his developmental level.

Be sure to discuss age-appropriate toys with family and friends, not only for your child, but for children who will be regularly visiting your home or for whom you are buying a gift.

And remember, just because you received a toy as a gift does not mean you are obligated to give it to your child.

Keeping Toy Time Safe Transcript

Toy recommendations: infants and toddlers

If you have children of different ages, or your child often visits a home where there are older children, he may have access to toys that are not safe for his age.

Infants and toddlers put everything in their mouths, and toys intended for an older age group often have small parts.

Use a child choking test tube for small toys. If an item can fit within the tube, it is not appropriate for small children.

Toy access

To keep younger children safe, have older children play in a designated area that smaller children cannot get into.

Playing with the toy within a container, like a roasting pan, can also reduce the risk of a lost part, which your child could find later.

You can designate a "small parts bin" for quick pick up and safe storage.

Another safety measure is to limit the playing time for those toys intended for older children to times when the younger children are taking a nap.

Teach older children the risks to younger children so they understand the importance of picking up after themselves.

Keeping Toy Time Safe Transcript

Toy storage

Toys only remain safe when they are properly stored and maintained.

Storing toys when they are not in use keeps play areas clean and reduces the risk that a toy will be damaged accidentally.

If you have a toy chest, it should have smooth edges, a lid that stays open, hinges that do not pinch, and ventilation holes.

Better yet, use open bins and baskets without lids.

A child-safe disinfectant or machine washing can help to sanitize stuffed toys.

Also, bring toys inside at the end of the day. Weather, including temperature, rain, snow, and wind can damage toys.

Regularly examine toys for signs of wear or broken pieces.

Long-term storage

When storing items for the long-term, it's best to pack them away in a location that is not visible or accessible to your child. Toys stored in sight on high shelves, for example, can be dangerous if your child decides he wants to play with something and tries to find a way to get to the toy.

Do you know?

Toy recall information is available:

- Only for toys manufactured in the last five years.
- Only for toys that were manufactured within the U.S.
- Only for toys manufactured between now and 1973.

Luckily recall information is available for U.S. and imported toys as far back as 1973.

Fortunately recall information is available for U.S. and imported toys as far back as 1973.

That's right! The U.S. government's database stores recall information for U.S. and imported toys as far back as 1973.

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Toy recalls

Each year, toys are recalled for various reasons, including:

Parts that are a choking hazard, electrical units which pose a burn risk, use of lead-based paint, or because they contain detachable small magnets.

To reduce your chance of purchasing a toy that has been recalled, buy toys that have product information clearly indicated on the toy.

In addition to recalled toys, older toys may not be safe because the safety standards when they were manufactured do not meet today's standards.

Toy recalls

It's up to consumers to stay on top of toy recalls. The best source for recalls is the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Their web site, www.cpsc.gov, has an extensive, easy-to-use database that lets you look up recalled toys dating as far back as 1973. In many cases, images are even available to help identify the toy.

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Toys are a necessary and wonderful part of childhood. You can help your child play safely by providing appropriate toys and helping to maintain them.

Thank You

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