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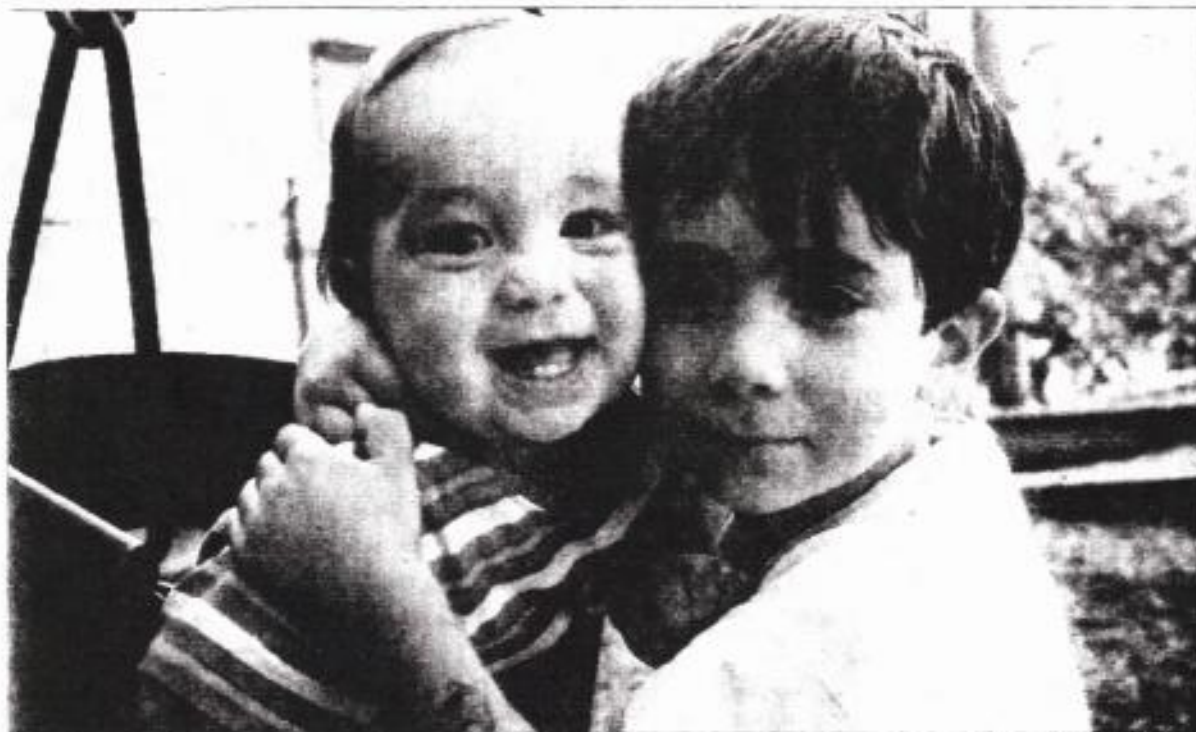


Photo courtesy of Linda Ginzel

Danny Keysar (left), pictured with his brother Ely, died 10 years ago in the collapse of a portable crib that had been recalled. Danny's mother, Linda Ginzel, has campaigned for tougher product safety standards since then.

Safety bill a boy's sad legacy

By Patricia Callahan
TRIBUNE REPORTER

Linda Ginzel never wanted to be a consumer activist.

The University of Chicago professor became one after her son Danny Keysar was strangled at his Lincoln Park day-care provider a decade ago when a recalled portable crib collapsed on his neck. It was two days after Mother's Day in 1998.

Danny, 16 months old, was the fifth baby to die in the Playskool Travel-Lite, which was made by Chicago-based Kolcraft Enterprises. Three months later, a New Jersey baby died in exactly the same way. In all, at least 17 children have died in portable cribs with a similar design.

Ginzel has spent the last decade pushing for tougher testing of children's products before they're sold and more effective ways of sweeping dangerous products off store shelves. She and her husband

founded Kids in Danger, a Chicago-based nonprofit dedicated to children's product safety.

"We'd rather have our son," Ginzel said, choking up. "But whatever we can do to protect other families—it's not really a choice we can make. It's something we have to do."

Ginzel has bared her grief before Congress and state legislatures around the country in the hopes that Danny's story would prod tougher safety laws. But it was a long fight.

The product-safety bill compromise announced Monday includes a provision named after Danny: That part of the law forces the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission to enact tougher safety rules for durable nursery products, including cribs, and requires that manufacturers test their products to those standards before they're sold.

"The whole idea is to make sure that children's products are safer when they get to stores rather than

having to retrieve recalled products," she said.

It also requires that manufacturers include registration cards—ones that don't ask prying questions, such as a consumer's income level—so that manufacturers can notify parents if there is a recall.

The crib that killed Danny didn't include such a card. The mom who donated the crib to the home day care didn't know it had been recalled, Ginzel said.

"Her daughter was still at the day care," Ginzel said. "Had she been notified, she would have been able to notify the day care. ... It might have saved my son's life."

Ginzel sees the law as part of Danny's legacy.

"This has the potential for real systemic change to truly improve the nation's product safety net," she said. "The time has come."

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