



Bumper Pads: A danger in the crib

Bumper pads pose suffocation, strangulation, choking, and falling hazards for children. A bare crib is a safe crib.



<This is Preston. He suffocated in 2010 when he rolled off a sleep positioner (now also banned) and against the bumper pad in his crib. He was eight weeks old.

This is Aiden and his grandmother. He suffocated in 2010, with his face against the bumper in his crib. His mother was in the room at the time, but babies suffocate silently.>



The safest place for babies to sleep is in a bare crib on their backs. Bumper pads, comforters, sleep positioners and other bedding create a suffocation risk and may increase the risk of SIDS.

Bumper pads are a soft bedding accessory that attach to the sides of the crib. This product is marketed to decorate the crib and protect infants from minor bumps and bruises. Research has linked this product to dozens of infant deaths.

Are there some bumpers that are safer than others?

No, while industry through ASTM has an infant bedding standard that addresses crib bumper pads, the bumpers which are meet the ASTM industry standard are the very ones that have been involved in infant deaths. Every major safety, health and children's organization opposes the use of crib bumper pads.

Is it mostly a concern for infants or older babies?

The suffocation risk is highest for younger babies, but for older babies, the bumper pad creates a step up for babies attempting to climb out of the crib causing them to fall. Falls are the leading cause of injury in cribs.

Why are they so dangerous? Isn't it dangerous to be exposed to the bars of a crib too?

There is no research that shows a baby can push up against the bare crib rails with enough force to cause severe injury. However, research does show that air circulation is a factor in SIDS. Bumpers pose a risk of mechanical suffocation and reduce the airflow in the crib even if the baby's face is not pressed tightly against it.

Chicago and the state of Maryland have both banned the sale of crib bumper pads and most states ban the use of bumpers in child care settings.

The baby's sleep environment must be as safe as possible. A crib is the one place that is intended for a baby to spend time unattended. We know babies have suffocated on crib bumpers and they are an unnecessary and dangerous product.