



A nonprofit organization
dedicated to protecting children by
improving children's product safety

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New Report Finds Increase in Injuries from Children's Products Recalled for Fire and Burn Hazards

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(CHICAGO, August 28, 2007) A report released today by Kids in Danger (KID) found that the number of children injured by products recalled for fire and burn-related hazards more than doubled in the last five years, in comparison with the preceding decade. This nearly 400% annual increase is only one of the many findings from the report that demonstrates the need for increased focus on and support for children's product safety.

A Smoldering Hazard: Fire and Burn Hazards of Children's Product Recalls, 2002-2007 examined the 40 children's products recalled by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) in the last five years for risk of fire and burns, and analyzed the recall process and its participants. "The fact that 40 products were recalled in the last year, compared to 42 products in the ten years before that means that somewhere along the way, children's product safety is getting sacrificed," Emma Rosenberg, the report's author said. "Technological advancements should correlate with a decrease in injuries and a decrease in recalls, not the opposite."

The report found that products were recalled for electrical failure, battery failure, flammability, and exposed heat surface/substance. A total of 5,400,014 units were recalled. While the report found that the majority of the products, nearly 60%, were recalled due to battery and electrical failure, the product which caused the most injuries and had the second largest recall was Hasbro Inc.'s Easy-Bake Oven, whose hazard was an exposed heat surface. In redesigning the decades old design that relied on a light bulb, the

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Hazard: Add One

new Easy-Bake Oven had metal inside of the oven that children could access through the front opening. "While recent recalls of products contaminated with lead have focused attention on the manufacturing process and imports," stated Nancy Cowles, executive director of KID, "this recall shows that faulty design contributes as well to injuries."

Some of the most hazardous products recalled included:

- o 1,000,000 units of Hasbro Inc.'s Easy-Bake Oven, responsible for 82 burns, one so severe as to require the amputation of a five-year-old's finger,
- o 180,000 units of Creative Innovation and Sourcing LLC's radio-control Pro-Flying Saucer, responsible for burning 7 children,
- o 233,000 units of Fisher-Price's Crib Mobile Toy, responsible for dripping battery acid on six infants, chemically burning them.

Other findings of this report include:

- o Elkton Sparkler Inc. had the largest recall at 1,700,000 units of Bamboo Stick Sparklers.
- o Thirty percent of the products recalled failed to pass the *Federal Flammable Fabrics Act*; all were articles of clothing.
- o Two manufacturers were responsible for four of the forty recalls in one year alone. In February 2006 Creative Innovations and Sources LLC recalled 8,000 of its Thunder Spin R.C. Road Rage Stunt Machine Trucks. Over a month later, it recalled 180,000 radio-controlled Pro Flying Saucers. Spin Master Toys waited even longer between recalls: nearly three months between recalling 7,500 radio-controlled airplanes and 46,200 remote-controlled helicopters. The nearly 300,000 units recalled in total all shared a similar problem: a power source that overheated. In total, 10 children were injured.

"Ultimately, the focus should not be on removing hazardous children's products from the market, but making sure that they aren't sold in the first place," Cowles continued. "No matter how effective recalls become, mandatory pre-market testing is the only way to ensure that no child gets injured."

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Hazard, Add two

KID was joined at the release by Dr. Tanz from Chicago's Children Memorial Hospital and Brian Imus from Illinois PIRG as well as a representative from the Chicago Fire Department. The release was held at the Engine 22 Firehouse on Armitage.

"These recalls demonstrate the Consumer Product Safety Commission lacks the leadership, the money, the staff and the legal authority it needs to protect children from dangerous products," said Brian Imus, State Director for Illinois PIRG. "Consumers and parents deserve better than after-the-fact, ineffective recalls."

"At best, burns are mild but painful. At worst they can be disfiguring or fatal. From the product injury perspective, toys that burn and pajamas that don't meet flammability standards are inexcusable," added Dr. Robert Tanz, physician at Children's Memorial Hospital and professor at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine. "It is long past time to build safety in to children's toys and other products."

KID recommends that parents check any children's products at www.cpsc.gov and sign up for safety updates at www.KidsInDanger.org. In addition, parents should report problems with a product to the CPSC as well as to the manufacturer.

Kids in Danger is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting children through improving children's product safety. Its mission is threefold: educate the public about hazardous products; promote the development of safer products; advocate for legislative support of children's product safety. KID was founded in 1998 by University of Chicago professors Linda Ginzel and Boaz Keysar after their 16-month-old son Danny died in a recalled portable crib. More information about Kids In Danger and dangerous juvenile products is available at (312) 595-0649 or www.KidsInDanger.org

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