



Kids In Danger: Press Statement
PROTECT OUR KIDS FROM TOXIC TOYS
Union Park, 1501 W. Randolph Street
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Good morning. My name is Sarah Chusid. I'm the program director of Kids In Danger. Kids In Danger is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting children by improving children's product safety.

Ten years ago, on May 12, 1998, the parents of Danny Keysar learned the tragic truth about our children's product safety system – that too little attention is paid to making products safe before they are sold, leaving our children as the guinea pigs for product safety testing. Danny was killed in a recalled portable crib at child care, a crib that was never tested for safety before it was sold. To date six children have died in that particular brand and 17 children all together in cribs of similar design.

Danny's parents founded Kids In Danger to keep other children safe. Our mission is to promote the development of safer children's products, advocate for children and educate the public, especially parents and caregivers, about product safety.

For ten years, KID has been talking about the lack of premarket testing of children's products. The startling number of recalls last year for hazards as old as lead and unsafe hardware and as new as magnets and toxic chemicals has finally brought a public clamor for safer products to Congress.

In response, the House of Representatives and Senate both passed legislation to ban lead in children's products and increase testing of toys and other children's products. Now, selected representatives and senators are meeting to hammer out the differences in the two bills and present one unified bill.

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Two Illinois representatives, Jan Schakowsky and Bobby Rush, serve on that conference committee. Both have been leaders in the process to make children's products safer and we commend their hard work to date, along with their tireless staffs.

We join Illinois PIRG, the Breast Cancer Fund, and parents throughout Illinois in calling on Representatives Schakowsky and Rush to ensure that the Feinstein amendment, which would ban Phthalates in children's products, is included in the final bill. You have heard today about the dangers of Phthalates. As with design flaws, parents can't protect their children from hidden toxins in toys, cribs and other products: we must rely on strong regulations, responsible manufacturing and adequate testing to make sure our children stay safe from these pervasive chemicals.

We commend those manufacturers and retailers who have already started to move away from the use of phthalates in products for children. But we can't just rely on corporations to do the right thing – our government needs to step in and ban these dangerous chemicals.

The CPSC Reform Act of 2008 will bring many important changes to the way children's products are regulated in this country, giving real protection to children. We again commend the work of Representatives Rush and Schakowsky for their leadership on this bill and urge them to include a phthalate ban to make products as safe as possible.