



KIDS IN DANGERSM ACTION

NEWSLETTER • SPRING 2000

INTRODUCTION

Dear friends and supporters,

Last year at this time, we gathered with many of you to honor Danny's loving memory at a fundraising dinner for Kids In Danger. Those of you who were with us know that it was an evening of tears and sorrow about our loss, filled with hope and promise for the future of our cause.

This year, we have chosen to mark the passing of the second year since May 12, 1998 with this commemorative newsletter. We are proud to showcase the many accomplishments of the community of people who comprise the nonprofit organization that we founded: Kids In Danger.

Since Danny died hundreds of people, all very busy with their own professional and personal lives, have devoted many days, weeks and months to do the work of Kids In Danger. This community of friends and supporters maintains the KidsInDanger.org web site, creates informational materials to educate the public about dangerous products, works with government officials to pass city, state and federal legislation,

alerts the media to report on dangerous children's products, does research aimed at improving the recall process, and on and on.

We are incredibly optimistic because we have seen a community of people outside our own circle of friends, who have been touched by our story and compelled to take action. People have put their expertise to work for Kids In Danger, lawyers, accountants, professors, business executives, journalists, public relations people, advertising people, legislators, city government, professional writers, computer experts, researchers. These are the people whose efforts are honored on the pages that follow.

It is rewarding for us to see that the media has begun to highlight the problem with children product safety. Informing the public about the dangers of unsafe products is our short-term goal. Kids In Danger's ultimate goal is to reform the system and work toward a day when dangerous juvenile products don't reach the market to begin with. As such, we are positioning Kids In Danger to attack the root causes of this flawed system. With your help, we raised \$100,000 last year. We also expanded our board of directors, and are currently recruiting an executive director. In the two years since Danny died, Kids In Danger is already poised to make systemic and lasting change. With your continued encouragement, help and support we know we can do it.

-Linda Ginzler and Boaz Keysar



THE FACTS

WHAT IS KIDS IN DANGER?

Founded in 1998 in the memory of Danny Keysar and all victims of children's products, Kids In Danger, a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization, is dedicated to protecting children from dangerous juvenile products.



**DON'T LEARN
ABOUT RECALLS
FROM YOUR BABY**

 **www.KidsInDanger.org**

Nationwide billboard campaign was made possible by the generosity of the Chancellor Outdoor Advertising Group and The Nahser Advertising Agency.

WHY WAS KIDS IN DANGER FOUNDED?

On May 12, 1998, 16-month-old Daniel Keysar was strangled to death at his licensed day care facility, when a Playskool Travel-Lite portable crib collapsed and the top rails closed around his neck. Shortly thereafter, Danny's parents, Linda Ginzel and Boaz Keysar, discovered that the portable crib was recalled in 1993. Three children died in these cribs before the recall and a fourth died in 1995. Danny became the crib's fifth victim. William Curran, a 10-month-old New Jersey baby, became the sixth child to be strangled to death by the Playskool crib in August of 1998.

Danny's parents launched Kids In Danger in May of 1998, which began with an urgent email campaign to parents all over the world warning them of the recalled Playskool Travel-Lite. In fact, 1.5 million portable cribs/play yards, of similar design by five different manufacturers, had been recalled, and 1.2 million recalled cribs were still unaccounted for. (Chicago Tribune, June 15, 1998).

Realizing the prevalence of dangerous children's products that have been recalled but are still being used by parents and caregivers, Ginzel and Keysar started Kids In Danger, now a nationally-recognized organization dedicated to protecting children from dangerous products.

*Below: "Recall Round Up" March 30, 1999
Caroline O. Schoenberger, Commissioner of the Consumer Services (in center); Eric Ault, Regional Director of the CPSC; Linda Ginzel, cofounder of Kids In Danger.*



SUCCESSES TO DATE

THE CITY OF CHICAGO

Within a few short weeks of Danny's death, City Commissioner of Consumer Services, Caroline O. Schoenberger, began working to initiate a recall program that would serve as a model for other cities to emulate across the nation.

In February 1999, Mayor Richard M. Daley launched the Chicago Recall Initiative and called on city agencies to make recall information more accessible to the public. In September 1999, Mayor Daley introduced legislation in City Council to protect children from recalled, second-hand products. It passed unanimously.

Kids In Danger has gone beyond its native Chicago to implement policies that will impact the lives of children all over the country, including—

THE ILLINOIS "CHILDREN'S PRODUCT SAFETY ACT"

In May 1999, the Illinois Senate unanimously passed The Children's Product Safety Act, the most extensive legislation of its kind. The new law makes illegal selling or leasing a recalled or unsafe children's product. It also requires the Department of Children and Family Services to verify that dangerous children's products are not used in licensed childcare facilities.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES (DCFS) INITIATIVE

Danny Keysar died in a licensed childcare home in the city of Chicago. Eight days before he died, a state inspector visited the facility but did not check for recalled products. Doing so was not part of DCFS

protocol. In September 1998, Linda Ginzel testified before the Illinois House Children and Youth Committee proposing five specific actions to eliminate unsafe and recalled products from licensed childcare facilities. DCFS immediately adopted her recommendations and is currently working with Kids In Danger to implement them.

THE "DANIEL KEYSAR MEMORIAL AND CHILDREN'S CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY ACT OF 1999"

Rod Blagojevich, along with 6 Congressional colleagues, introduced a bill: HR 3208 in November 1999. Named in honor of Danny, this legislation amends the Consumer Product Safety Act in order to make a number of improvements in the way that the CPSC handles recalls of defective children's products and to make information about these recalls more accessible to the general public.

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS (AAP)

Kids In Danger's board member Dr. Robert Tanz drafted an AAP resolution to determine the impact of previously recalled products on the risk of injury to young children. In addition, the resolution calls on the CPSC to work with the AAP to develop more effective systems for informing parents about the potential danger and removing recalled juvenile products from the environments of children. The resolution was approved at the AAP Annual Chapter Forum in September 1999. It passed unanimously.

U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION

Kids In Danger has mounted an effective campaign to have people across the nation receive recall information and safety news directly from this government agency.

WHY DOES OUR SYSTEM FAIL AND HOW PREVALENT IS THE PROBLEM?

- Most children's products are not required to be tested before they are sold. In fact, many products aren't tested by an independent laboratory.
- In 1998 alone, more than 38 million individual children's products were recalled.
- Despite the 250-300 products that are recalled annually by the Consumer Protection Safety Commission, most people never hear about the dangers.
- Return rates of recalled products average between 5 and 30 percent.
- The Consumer Product Safety Commission, the government agency responsible for children's product safety, has a budget that is smaller than the FDA's budget for regulating medicine.



MAJOR GIFTS

The State of Illinois
\$25,000
Special thanks to
Senator Carol Ronen

Hollywood Video
\$20,000



The Allstate Foundation
\$10,000

Picture on left: Kids In Danger won the
1998 Allstate Safety Leadership Award.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kathleen A. Carpenter
Nancy Cowles
Linda E. Ginzel
Howard Haas
Jennifer Hauser
Boaz Keysar
June Rosner
Chris Sweeney
Steven W. Swibel
Dr. Robert R. Tanz
Lisa M. Turano

EMAIL@KIDSINDANGER.ORG BULLETIN BOARD

My condolences on losing your son Danny. As a parent of two young boys, I cannot imagine how difficult it must be. Thank you, thank you for sending the information on the portable cribs. We use one of those mentioned (Happy Camper) and had heard NOTHING about this danger. Because of your message, we have ordered the hinge covers. I have emailed the message to a number of friends with young children, and will post it in a couple daycares and fax our sons' pediatrician.
Daniel N. McIntosh, Ph.D.

I had never before heard of any recalls on portable cribs. On my return to work the following day I checked with my daycare provider to see the brand of crib I was using. I checked my brand to your list and YES it is on there. I also checked the other cribs at the daycare and found that another one was also on the list. I can't thank you enough for this information. I want you to know because of your web page you may have saved two more babies lives.
Dianna Newby

We were given a hand-me-down Century crib, model 10-710. Thankfully our child was safe and unharmed by the use of it. We have destroyed the crib so it will never be used again. I had actually been thinking about donating the crib to a church sale had I not read this article. It is unacceptable that manufacturers can be this irresponsible to our children. It comes down to pure greed, that the almighty dollar has come before the health and well being of people. I hope the article I read will reach many others and a child's death can be prevented.
Nancy Loughran

At work today, a co-worker loaned me his People magazine to read and I read the article about your organization. I am very, very sorry about your baby. I went home, got on your website and was stunned to find out that I have the same travel playpen that was recalled. I have used it with my 20-month-old son, and was planning on passing it onto my sister who is getting ready to take in foster kids. It scares me when I think about all the times I thought my son was 'safe' in it, and I went out of the room. I thank you so much for taking the time to make this website!! Neither my sister or I would have known about this had I not read the article and went to your site.
Charlotte Parscal

I heard about your most tragic loss a few weeks ago. I took note of the model of porta-crib Daniel died in and sighed in relief that it was not the same as we've been using for over four years now - first with our 4 year old daughter and now with our 20 month old son. Seeing your story on 20/20 tonight prompted me to check the CPSC web site (I failed to connect after several tries) to get a list of other recalled items. When I couldn't reach the CPSC I connected with your web-site. My God - was I shocked to learn that our trusted and long-relied upon porta-crib - the very one my son was crying himself to sleep in right then - WAS recalled (All Our Kids playard model 741)! I had no idea and probably never would have if not for your organization.
Sheila

I am writing to commend you for your work. It is because of your efforts that I have taken a more proactive role in safety issues regarding children's products. My son was recently injured, thankfully only minor, in a fall from his high chair. I believed that the fall was due to a faulty strap on the chair so I contacted the Consumer Product Safety Commission. An investigator quickly responded to my concerns and came to our home. If I hadn't seen your interviews I wouldn't have known what to do or how to become involved. I have also made it a regular practice to check the CPSC website for recalls and suggest that my friends do the same. I thank you for your concern and efforts. You have been in my thoughts often.
Staci Hansen

Thank you for the information on recalls. I have forwarded this message to all of my email addresses, and I have printed it and am giving hard copies to many people. The dissemination of recall information is horribly lacking. We have called all of the manufacturers of the equipment we use with our children and discovered that the carrier of our stroller has been recalled because it flips children out of the seat; we returned the warranty card over a year ago, when we purchased the stroller, and still were not notified of the recall. It is certainly clear now that parents and child care providers and state agencies need to be proactive in chasing this information down. Again, I am so very sorry for your loss. Know that you are in my thought and prayers.
David Dotson

HOW TO REACH US

Please contact Kids In Danger anytime.
We welcome your support and ideas.



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email@KidsInDanger.org

SPREADING THE WORD

Kids In Danger is working hard to "get the word out" about potentially deadly products. Here's how we're doing it:

Public Service Announcements (PSAs) – Kids In Danger issues PSAs to radio stations nationwide. The PSAs encourage consumers to become informed by calling the Consumer Product Safety Commission (800-638-2772) or visiting their website (www.cpsc.gov).

Billboards – Kids In Danger has launched a national billboard campaign urging parents to ensure their children's products haven't been recalled.

Media Coverage – Kids In Danger and Danny Keysar's story has been featured in *People*, *Newsweek*, *US News & World Report*, *Child*, *Mother Jones* and *Chicago* magazine. Television coverage includes "The Oprah Winfrey Show," "The Today Show," "CBS This Morning," "20/20" and "Extra."

HOW CAN I HELP KIDS IN DANGER?

- **Tax-deductible Donation** – Your tax-deductible contribution allows Kids In Danger to continue our work on behalf of all children. An envelope addressed to Kids In Danger is enclosed for your convenience. Please donate to save lives.
- **Become a Corporate Sponsor** – Businesses of all sizes can make cash donations and be recognized by Kids In Danger.
- **Participate in Kids In Danger's Letter Writing Campaign** – Write your friends about how they can help Kids In Danger. Kids In Danger will provide you with the necessary materials.

Consumer Booklet – Kids In Danger has created a booklet about the prevalent danger of unsafe products. The booklet gives parents and caregivers tools to protect their children against dangerous or potentially dangerous juvenile products.

Seminars – Kids In Danger is developing a national seminar program for schools, community centers, day care facilities and corporate and government offices to alert and educate parents on unsafe products.



Above: "The Children's Product Safety Act" August 1999
Illinois Governor George Ryan and State Senator Carol Ronen, with Linda Ginzel and Boaz Keysar.

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