



# ACTION NEWSLETTER

FALL 2003

## Kids In Danger (KID)

is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting children by improving children's product safety. KID was founded in 1998 by Linda Ginzel and Boaz Keysar, the parents of sixteen-month-old Danny Keysar who died in his Chicago childcare home when a portable crib collapsed around his neck.



## KID's Mission

is to **promote** the development of safer children's products, **advocate** for children, and **educate** the public, especially parents and caregivers, about dangerous children's products.

**Look inside to learn more about these efforts and others that KID is undertaking to protect children by improving children's product safety. →**

## At Five Years Old, Kids In Danger Still Working Hard for Children's Product Safety

As we pass our five year anniversary, KID continues to meet the challenges poised by unsafe children's products.

KID was founded by Danny Keysar's parents, Linda Ginzel and Boaz Keysar, five years ago. Since that time, KID has become synonymous to many parents with trusted information on children's product safety and with policymakers as a voice pressing for strengthening our children's product safety system. KID's programs continue to work for those goals.

The three programs outlined in the Spring **ACTION** Newsletter have all grown tremendously from that time. **Teach Early Safety Testing (TEST)**, KID's outreach program to engineering education programs is currently working with four programs to incorporate children's product safety into the curriculum. At **Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology** in Terre Haute Indiana and **University of Michigan** in Ann Arbor, seniors can choose from among design projects suggested by Kids In Danger to address problems in children's product design. From a portable crib that doesn't create a v-shaped hazard to warnings to parents when a stroller isn't fully latched, design students will look not only at a particular design problem, but get a view of the larger scope of issues involved in safe product design. At **Illinois Institute of Technology** and **Purdue University**, KID is working with the engineering and service learning departments to incorporate information about children's product safety into many parts of the curriculum. Again our thanks to **Underwriter's Laboratory** for funding and direction for this project, **Ram Consulting** for providing background and allowing us to visit their testing site and the professors at the engineering programs who have joined us so enthusiastically.

**Test It Now!** a grassroots awareness campaign for children's product safety made great strides this summer due to the dedication and hard work of **Ellen Brinkerhoff**, a Metcalf Intern from the University of Chicago. During her ten weeks at KID, Ellen greatly increased the outreach of the program and developed new materials and website content to continue the growth of the program long after she returns to school.

**The Health Care Providers Outreach Program** now has a presence at four pilot sites in the Chicago area. **At Town and Country Pediatrics** on Chicago's northside, patients have been surveyed about children's product safety and after an informal briefing of the staff, posters are now in all exam rooms and brochures available for interested patients and caregivers. KID will institute similar programs at Children's Memorial Continuity Clinic, the Friends Family Clinic at University of Chicago Children's Hospital and the Women's Care program at University of Chicago Hospital and Northwestern University Prentice Women's Program. After the pilot period and evaluation, these materials will be presented this fall at the national conference of the American Academy of Pediatrics and available for wider distribution at that time.

Along with these exciting programs, KID continues our outreach to childcare providers, parents, and policymakers to promote the development of safer children's products, educate the public and advocate for children. Watch your mailbox and our website for our 2003 Annual Report.



# Kids In Danger Honors Three Best Friends in May

The Third Annual KID's Best Friend Award Night was held May 5 at Monsoon in Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood. Over 100 guests joined with Kids In Danger to honor Danny Keysar's memory and celebrate the work of three "Best Friends."

In their respective arenas of government, Congresswoman **Jan Schakowsky**, Illinois State Senator **Carol Ronen** and Chicago Commissioner of Consumer Services **Caroline Shoenberger** have been staunch supporters of increased children's product safety. In Chicago, Commissioner Shoenberger has been vigilant in removing unsafe children's products from second hand stores and in informing Chicago consumers about the issues of recalled children's products. Senator Ronen passed the first Children's Product Safety Act in Illinois, now law in six other states as well, and continues to monitor children's product safety in childcare in Illinois. Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky has stepped up to sponsor legislation that would require manufacturers to test their children's products before they reach store shelves. KID salutes these "Best Friends" and looks forward to working with them.



L to R: Hedy Ratner talking with recipient Caroline Shoenberger and June Rosner

The Best Friend Award Night, KID's only annual fundraising event, raised over \$20,000 for KID programs, a 23% increase over last year. Guests enjoyed the wonderful food and drinks provided by Monsoon and took home many wonderful items from our silent auction.

KID would like to thank **Monsoon**, **Chandra Ram** and **Magnet Communications**, **Jimmy Gillespie** for the sound system, our wonderful student volunteers and all the generous donors to the silent auction for making this a memorable event.

## Spotlight

On December 19th 2002, Thomas and Lisa Davis' lives changed forever. On a holiday trip to her grandparents' home, Elizabeth was laid down for a nap in a new Graco Pack-n-Play recently purchased by her grandmother. Wanting to show his parents how Elizabeth would yell, "Come in!" when someone knocked on the door, Elizabeth's father grew concerned when he heard no reply. He opened the door finding 13-month-old daughter's head lodged between the side rail and the attached changing table of her Graco Pack-n-Play (Model 9531CYP) play yard.

Elizabeth Morgan Davis was killed after barely one year of life. Her family had no way of knowing how dangerous the crib could be.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has investigated the incident and in September issued a notice of new safety instructions. Rather than recall the product, the manufacturer, Graco, will send out a warning label to be put on the changing table attachment. For safety, KID urges parents and caregivers using this, or other models of play yards, to remove all attachments before using for sleeping or playing.



**Elizabeth Morgan Davis**

November 4, 2001-December 19, 2002

Elizabeth's parents have joined the struggle to attain safe products for children. Lisa tells KID, "I strongly hope to join the fight for protecting our children, and demanding that manufacturers of children's products are held to stricter guidelines in their product designs. I hope no other family out there will have to live through what we did, ever again."

## Advocacy Update

KID continues to work diligently to gain support for the **Children's Product Safety Act (CPSA)**. Danny Keysar died in 1998, yet 43 states are still without legislation protecting children from dangerous children's products. The Children's Product Safety Act prohibits the resale or lease of recalled children's products or their use in licensed childcare facilities. Currently Illinois, Michigan, Vermont, Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri and Rhode Island have passed the CPSA.

The Children's Product Safety Act saves lives. Contact KID to receive a KID Action Pack filled with information on how to make a difference in your state and children's lives.



# False Sense of Security

In fall 2003, KID released a report called "False Sense of Security: Recall Histories of Leading Children's Products Manufacturers (1993-2003)." This report focuses on the recall histories of major children's product brand names over the past ten years. Parents often assume that the only old or "off-brand" products are dangerous and that popular, trusted brand names are more likely to be safe. As the report shows, this trust is often misplaced. Companies like Cosco, Graco, Evenflo, and Playskool have high injury and recall rates. Without mandatory safety testing, any children's products, regardless of brand name, can prove dangerous. Other findings of this report include:

- ⚠ Within the last decade, the children's product industry has recalled almost 60 million items.
- ⚠ Nine companies have recalled more than five products.
- ⚠ Cosco and Graco posted the most recalls with 13 and 12 recalls respectively.
- ⚠ Eleven products broke, malfunctioned or otherwise failed over 400 times before they were recalled.
- ⚠ In the past decade, juvenile products caused over 3,000 injuries.
- ⚠ Recalled products are responsible for almost 40 reported deaths in the last decade. Graco's products have been linked to 11 deaths and Kolcraft to 7 deaths.

Based on this report, Kids In Danger recommends that mandatory testing for all children's products be developed to prevent unsafe products from entering the marketplace. Stringent safety standards should be developed and products should be required to achieve certification of these standards. Finally, manufacturers should take a more proactive role in the recall process in order to ensure that all recalled products are removed from use in homes and childcare facilities.

## Board & Staff Update

KID said goodbye to Program Director **Genevieve Kirk** in May as she left for a two-year stint with the Peace Corps in Mauritania West Africa and welcomed this September our new program director, **Kate Grady**. Kate is a Public Interest Program Fellow from the University of Chicago and will be with KID for one year before she continues her studies at medical school.

We also said good-bye to longtime board members **Marla Felcher** and **Chris Sweeney** and welcomed to the Board **Heather Shinn** from MidAmerica Bank and **Kris Anderson**, Of Counsel at Kirkland and Ellis Chicago.

The Board of Directors has formed task groups to work on outreach and advocacy, finances, fundraising, marketing and public relations. If you have talents to volunteer in any of the areas, please contact our executive director, Nancy Cowles.





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## Missing Out?

Are you missing out on important children's product safety news and Kids In Danger updates? Sign up at [www.KidsInDanger.org](http://www.KidsInDanger.org) to receive our monthly email alerts. KID will keep you abreast of recalls, policy decisions and other news to help keep children safe.

## Donor & Supporter Notes

**Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.**

KID extends a special thanks to donors since our last newsletter including:

- Dan Shapiro and the Lester and Edna Shapiro Family Foundation for two donations of \$1000 and \$2500
- The Donald Lerner Family Foundation for their gift of \$500
- Jeanne Brett for her \$500 contribution
- Irene Freeman and Robert McDonald for their \$500 contribution
- Eileen Barr for her \$35 contribution in honor of Dale Barr's birthday
- A \$50 contribution from Paul and Colleen Mazzetta in memory of Anne Cohen
- Joan Kaye Cauthorn for her \$250 donation in honor of Jill Beigel and Linda Ginzel
- The many contributors in honor of the birth of Avi D. Keysar and in memory of his brother Danny Keysar: Helen Albert, Jill Beigel, Clare Buckley, Theresa Czarnik, Helene Hogarth-Delmas & Guy Delmas, Mary English & Ellen Wildman, Jonathan Eig & Jennifer Tescher, Gene & Sallyann Fama, Alon and Ayelet Fishbach, Uri and Ayelet Gneezy, H. Hill Goldsmith and Morton Ann Gernsbacher, Reid Hastie, Emanuel and Rivka Kahana, Leslie Kay, Grace Kim, Susan and Kevin Kroegger, Patricia La Malfa, Harold Leavitt and Jean Lipman-Blumen, Tanya Menon, Geraldine McCabe Miele, Victor Mor-Avi, Margret Nickels, Mary Ann and Joe Opperman, Moishe Postone, Karen and Jeffrey Raizen, Lance Rips and Julie Johnson, Beth Rosenthal, Abbie Smith Tzachi and Orit Zamir, David Walsh, Dan Webb, Marvin Zonis and Lucy Salenger

Since KID joined the Car Donation program, over 35 cars have been donated to KID. Thanks for recent car donations from Henry Breton and Carl Davis.

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