



Fighting for Product Safety

SEVEN-YEAR KID CHECKUP ON SAFERPRODUCTS.GOV

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Executive Summary

In 2008 Congress passed and the President signed into law, the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA) which strengthened the U.S Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) through granting it new authority. One provision of the CPSIA created a publicly accessible database providing product safety information to consumers. Importantly, the database provided consumers and others the ability to report safety concerns about consumer products which has provided consumers with a new and important source of product safety information. The database also provides manufacturers with the opportunity to respond directly to a report before it is published and available to the public. This database, SaferProducts.gov, was launched in March of 2011.

This report examines the effectiveness of SaferProducts.gov to date focusing on reports involving children 18 and younger, seeks to identify patterns in data, and provides recommendations for expanding the reach of this important safety tool.

Here are the main findings of the report:

- Ninety-four percent of reports involved an incident, injury or death while fewer than 2% were concerns about products with no incidents.
- Almost half, 46%, of all reports involved an injury.
- Overall, hazards causing bodily harm were most frequently reported (46%) followed distantly by choking at 14%.
- Over half of all reports, 56%, were made for children under three.
- Manufacturers were also more likely to comment if the report involved children under three. Forty-seven percent of those reports had manufacturer comments.
- Nursery products and toys comprise 59% of reports.
- Within the nursery category, 20% were for cribs or crib mattresses.
- From 2012 to 2017 (first and last full years) reports to the database annually have dropped 62%.
- Some manufacturers of children's and toddler products appear repeatedly in the list of incident reports. Most frequently named companies include Fisher Price (mostly for the Rock'n'Play), Pampers (diapers), and Graco (range of nursery products).

KID recommends:

- Greater emphasis should be placed on marketing the database to consumers for filing reports and researching incidents.
- All reports associated with recalls should link to the recall. This serves both the original poster and others who view it.
- As many as 50% of reports are not included in the database for undisclosed reasons. The CPSC should review these to determine ways to get more included in the database.
- SaferProducts.gov contains a lot of data; the CPSC should report annually to evaluate trends in harm posed by products and other reports on specific hazards more regularly.

- Consumers should frequent the site whenever they are looking to make a purchase, checking a hand-me-down, or have an adverse experience with a product.

Introduction

Kids In Danger (KID) downloaded 21,372 incident reports published on SaferProducts.gov between March 3, 2011 and July 11, 2018 that either identified a victim age 18 or under or did not identify a victim age. From there, reports that did not involve products intended for children, or two of the most common product hazards that affect children: furniture tip overs including televisions, and laundry pods were removed. That reduced the data set 5,547 incident reports which the following report will analyze.

As the information in this report was gathered from consumer reports submitted to SaferProducts.gov, it does not include subsequent information that may be found in subsequent investigations. Therefore, the data collected and analyzed in this report documents consumer's experience with a product, not official findings or defects.

Report Findings

Ages Affected

When filing incident reports, approximately 20 percent of individuals did not list the age of the victim of the incident. In some of these cases it was due to a non-consumer identifying product hazards, but in most cases, the field was left blank due to a hazard reported without injury. The reports were then broken down into age categories representing infants and toddlers (0-2), preschoolers (3-5), children (6-14) and late teens (15-18). As age increased, the number of consumer reports appeared to decrease with infants and toddlers making up 56% of all reports.

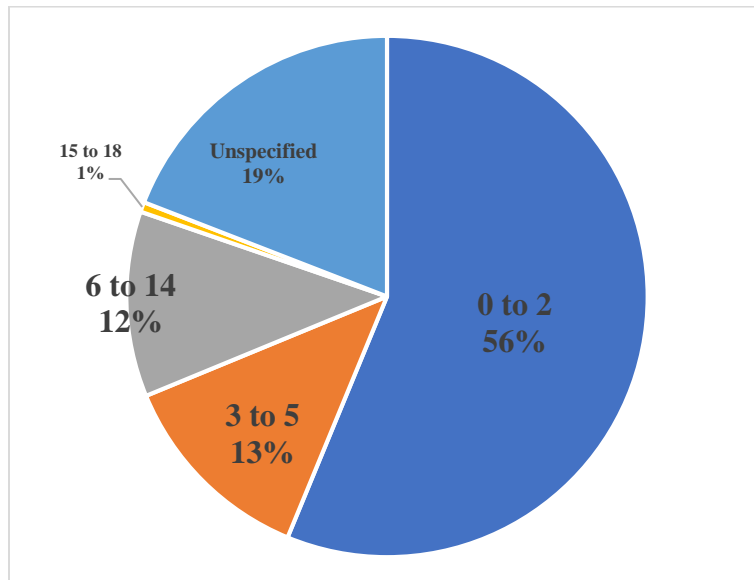


Figure 1. Reports published on SaferProducts.gov between March 3, 2011 and July 11, 2018 by identified incident age group.

A key aspect of SaferProducts.gov is the ability for manufacturers to respond directly to consumers who report an incident or injury with their product. Overall, 2,441 comments were included in consumer reports. Children’s ages appeared to have a relationship to the frequency in which manufacturers provided a comment to consumers experiencing a product hazard. For infants and toddlers, manufacturers responded 47 percent of the time, preschooler’s 42 percent, children 41 percent and older teens 35 percent.

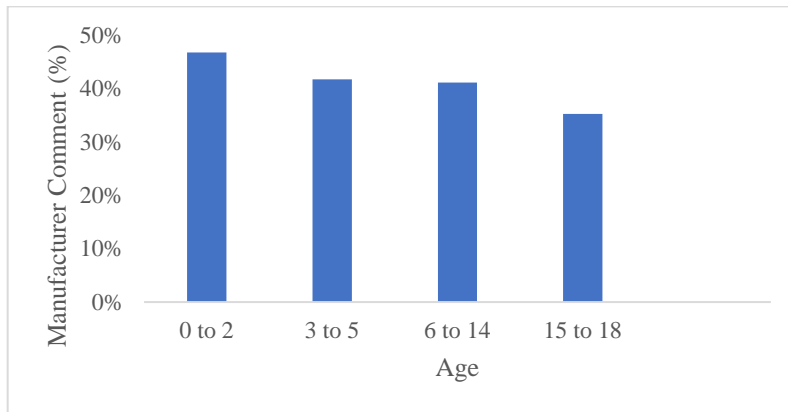


Figure 2. Frequency of manufacturer comment within a consumer report published on SaferProducts.gov between March 11, 2011 and July 11, 2018 given the primary victim’s age.

Categories

Of all the children’s products included in published reports on SaferProducts.gov in the seven-year period analyzed, nursery products and toys continue to make up the largest percentage of product reports, as they did when the data was assessed by KID in 2013, for children under 18.

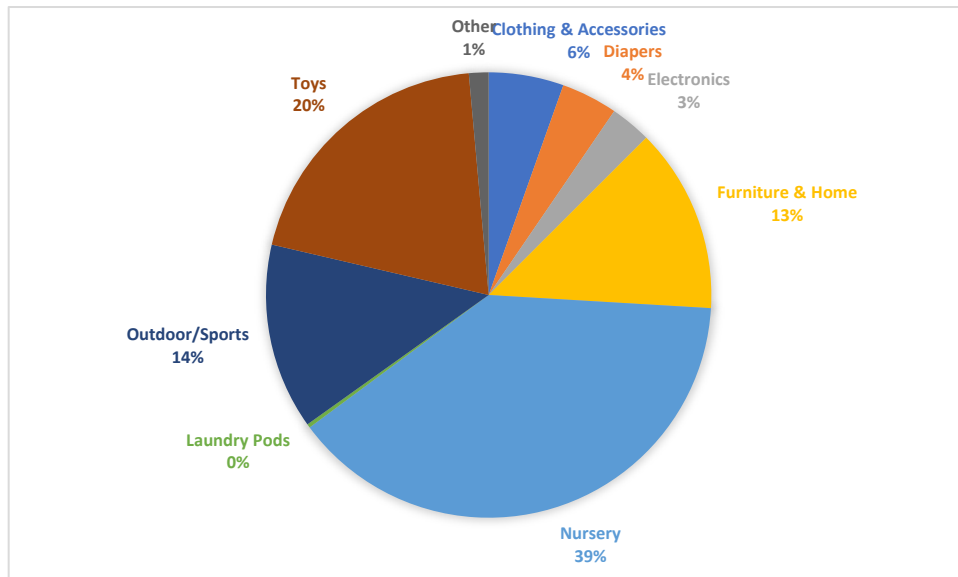


Figure 3. Percentage of reports published on SaferProducts.gov between March 11, 2011 and July 11, 2018 divided by category involving children 18 and younger.

Children of different ages are affected by products at different rates. The following table, Table 1, documents that nursery products affect infants and toddlers at the highest rate followed by furniture and home, preschoolers are affected most by toys, and children and teens are affected most by outdoor and sport equipment.

Table 1. Breakdown of incident reports by age and product category. Reports published on SaferProducts.gov between March 11, 2011 and July 11, 2018.

	0 to 2	3 to 5	6 to 14	15 to 18	Unspecified	Total
Clothing & Accessories	138	46	47	0	71	302
Diapers	207	6	0	0	14	227
Electronics	26	27	14	5	93	165
Furniture & Home	356	141	120	3	125	745
Nursery	1708	66	7	0	378	2159
Laundry Pods	8	5	1	0	1	15
Outdoor/Sports	158	186	263	25	117	749
Toys	464	214	185	1	242	1106
Other	21	5	1	0	52	79
Total	3086	696	638	34	1093	5547

As nursery products are the largest hazard for all age groups, Table 2 provides a breakdown of specific types of nursery products that pose the greatest threat to children.

Table 2. Frequency of nursery product types that led to consumer hazard reports published on SaferProducts.gov between March 11, 2018 and July 11, 2018 for all age groups.

Product Type	Frequency Reported
Crib/Mattresses	440
Infant Exerciser	369
Stroller/Carrier	356
Bassinet/Cradle	304
Pacifier	247
High Chair	192
Baby Gate	69
Playpen	61
Other	121

Total	2159
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Brands

Because data is entered and not always corrected, misspellings of brands and models can be hard to catch. For children’s products in the database, the following chart shows the most commonly named brands.

Table 3. Top nursery product brands named in published reports on SaferProducts.gov between March 11, 2018 and July 11, 2018

Brand	Reported Frequency	Most common product/model
Fisher Price	360	Rock’n’Play
Pampers	144	Diapers
Graco	117	Assorted products

Hazards

Individuals who submitted reports that were published, choose to report products to SaferProducts.gov, most commonly because they felt that a specific product posed a bodily injury hazard (44%), choking (14%) or entrapment (11%) to a child (Table 3). In each of these hazard categories, infants and toddlers were the most likely to be affected by these hazards. Fifty percent of reporters reporting a bodily injury threat were for children under the age of three, 73% of choking hazards and 79% of entrapment hazards were all for children under the age of three as well (Table 4).

Table 3. Hazard frequency and associated percentages of reports published on to SaferProducts.gov between March 11, 2011 and July 11, 2018.

	Reported Frequency	Percentage
Bodily Injury	2447	44%
Burn/Fire	434	8%
Choking	799	14%
Drowning	44	1%
Entrapment	568	11%
Ingestion	245	4%
Mold	295	5%
Rash/Reaction	314	6%
Strangulation	132	2%
Suffocation	153	3%
Other	117	2%
Total	5547	100%

Table 4. Breakdown of incident reports by product hazard and age. Reports published on SaferProducts.gov between March 11, 2011 and July 11, 2018.

Hazard	0 to 2	3 to 5	6 to 14	15 to 18	Unspecified	Total
Bodily Injury	1218	389	429	21	379	2436
Burn/Fire	81	62	82	10	199	434
Choking	580	37	10	0	172	799
Drowning	31	8	1	0	4	44
Entrapment	446	70	26	0	26	568
Ingestion	113	42	36	0	54	245
Mold	189	3	1	0	102	295
Rash/Reaction	222	41	36	0	15	314
Strangulation	76	29	3	0	24	132
Suffocation	99	6	0	0	47	152
Other	64	9	14	3	38	128
Total	3119	696	638	34	1060	5547

Injuries and Deaths

Forty-seven percent of reports involving children 18 and younger published on SaferProducts.gov involved an injury or death of a child. Sixty-seven percent of the injuries required medical attention (ranging from emergency department visit to at-home treatment). Forty-three deaths are reported on the database. Thirty-five of the reported deaths (81%) involved children under the age of three.

Table 5. Incident severity by age group reported to SaferProducts.gov between (dates in search).

	Death	Incident	Injury	Concern	Unknown	Total
0 to 2	35	1431	1627	6	20	3119
3 to 5	2	278	407	6	3	696
6 to 14	5	209	421	1	2	638
15 to 18	0	17	17	0	0	34
Unknown	1	698	68	86	207	1060
Total	43	2633	2540	99	232	5547

Use of SaferProducts.gov

In analyzing the effectiveness of SaferProducts.gov in terms of children’s product safety, SaferProducts.gov has seen a downshift in the use of its report database. Since the website was released in March of 2011, we began our analysis of annual trends in 2012, the first full year that Saferproducts.gov was live. In 2012, 1,156 reports were posted regarding unsafe children’s products, the following year 979 reports were published. Although the first two years of the website may be heavily skewed due to retrospective product claims, the decreasing number of

published reports has continued through to 2016, with only 431 reports. In 2017, 438 reports were posted. In 2018 through mid-July, 124 reports have been published on SaferProducts.gov. The underutilization of the website is detrimental to consumers and suggests limited awareness and/or understanding of the utility of the database by the public.

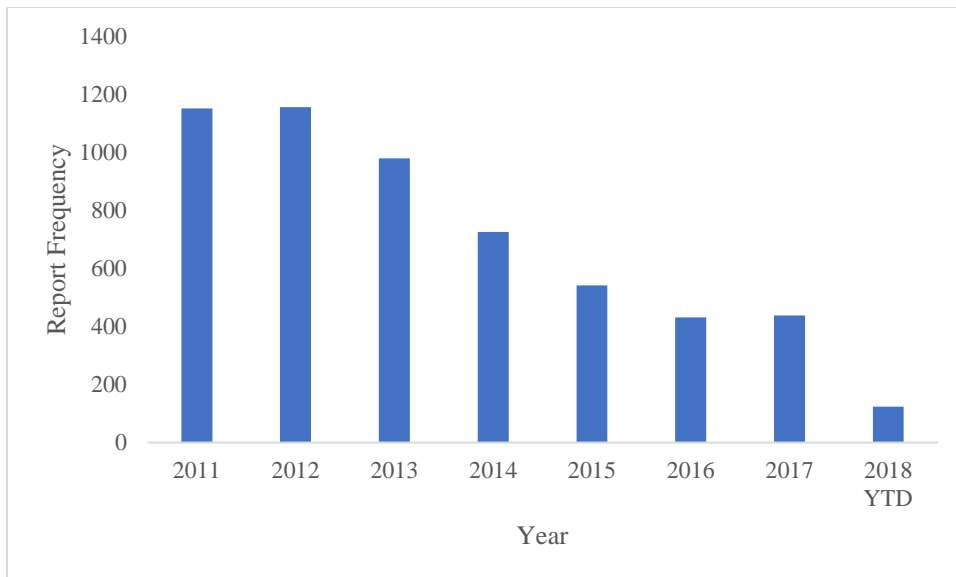


Figure 4. Published reports per year: reports published on SaferProducts.gov between March 11, 2011 and July 11, 2018. Note that 2011 and the final year, 2018 YTD, represent less than a full year, and not represent a forecasted number of reports.

KID Recommendations

- The CPSC and other stakeholders should increase efforts to market the database to consumers in order to increase awareness of the database, to increase the numbers of published reports and increase the number of consumers researching incidents.
- All reports associated with recalls should link to the recall. This serves both the original poster and others who view it.
- Consider how to include more consumer reports. As many as 50% of reports are not included in the database for undisclosed reasons. The CPSC should review these to determine ways to get more included in the database.
- SaferProducts.gov contains a lot of data; the CPSC should release an annual report evaluating the trends in harm posed by products in the database and should release other reports on specific emerging hazards more regularly.
- Consumers should frequent the site whenever they are looking to make a purchase, checking a hand-me-down, or have an adverse experience with a product.

Conclusion

According to the Saferproducts.gov homepage, four of the six top categories searched for on the site are children’s products (cribs, bunk beds/toddler beds, high chairs, and strollers). Parents of young infants and toddlers rely on the SaferProducts.gov database to make and review reports. We recommend that parents go to Saferproducts.gov frequently to ensure overall safety of the

consumer products they own or are considering purchasing. We urge consumers to utilize the reporting feature to inform other consumers. Reported incidents give other families the ability to inform their purchasing or use decisions to keep their children safe.

Notes on research, definitions and terminology

Category Definitions

Data review consolidated products into the following categories:

- Clothing & Accessories
- Diapers
- Electronics
- Furniture & Home
- Nursery Products
- Laundry Pods
- Outdoor/Sports
- Toys
- Other

KID included a separate category of Diapers due to the large number of reports regarding a specific brand and hazard. Electronics refers to any electronic device specifically intended for children such as a children's learning tablet, and it also includes night lights. Furniture & Home refers to furniture and televisions involved in a tip-over incident, outlet covers, cabinet locks and children's glassware. Nursery Products refers to products used specifically for infants such as strollers, cribs, baby entertainment centers, high chairs and pacifiers. Outdoor/Sports primarily are made up of incidents involving bikes or hoverboards. Other refers to products that did not fit in any other category including books and prescription medication containers.

Hazard Definitions

After review of each consumer report, KID identified 11 primary product hazards, as follows:

- Bodily Injury/Fall
- Burn/Fire
- Choking
- Drowning
- Entrapment
- Ingestion
- Mold
- Rash/Reaction
- Strangulation
- Suffocation
- Other

It should be noted that bodily injury includes both bodily impacts such as bruising as well as lacerations. Ingestion includes poisonous and non-poisonous substances, as well as incidences where children have been exposed to lead or other neurotoxins. Entrapment includes incidents of children's limbs being caught, especially between crib rails, as well as incidences of full body entrapment such as a tent collapse.