

# LEAD- TAINTED:



**AN ANALYSIS OF CHILDREN'S PRODUCTS  
RECALLED FOR VIOLATING FEDERAL LEAD  
GUIDELINES BETWEEN 2003-MAY 2020.**



**July 2020**

Kids In Danger | [www.kidsindanger.org](http://www.kidsindanger.org)

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Between April 4, 2003 and April 30, 2020, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) recalled 311 children's products for violating federal lead guidelines in the United States.

- The percent increase in children's products recalled for lead between January – May 2019 compared to January – May 2020, is 400%.
- Between 2014 and 2019 , an average of 3.5 children's products were recalled for lead annually. As of May 2020, 4 children's products have been recalled for violating Federal lead guidelines.
- Between 2014 and 2020, the product categories that saw the most lead recalls were toys (10), jewelry (10), and outdoor and sport (4).
- In recalled products, lead is overwhelmingly found in paint or enamel (15), followed by content or parts (5), and plastic (3).
- Lead can threaten a child's health without caregivers even being aware it is in the product.

# FEDERAL LEAD GUIDELINES

Following the 2008 Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA), the United States adopted rigid guidelines for the use of lead in commercial merchandise. The change was incremental, so to allow manufacturers to become compliant. What began as a 600 parts per million (ppm) limit for any product became 300 ppm a year after the Act was passed. At present, manufacturers may use up to 100 ppm for any part of their product.

It should be noted that the rise in product recalls before the CPSIA is most likely attributable to greater lead product testing after a few high-profile recalls. Fisher-Price, a subsidiary of Mattel, was fined \$2.3 million by the CPSC after several of their products were deemed noncompliant with federal lead guidelines in 2007.

That said, the Act itself had many positive consequences, including a sharp decline in the number of lead recalls each year after 2007.

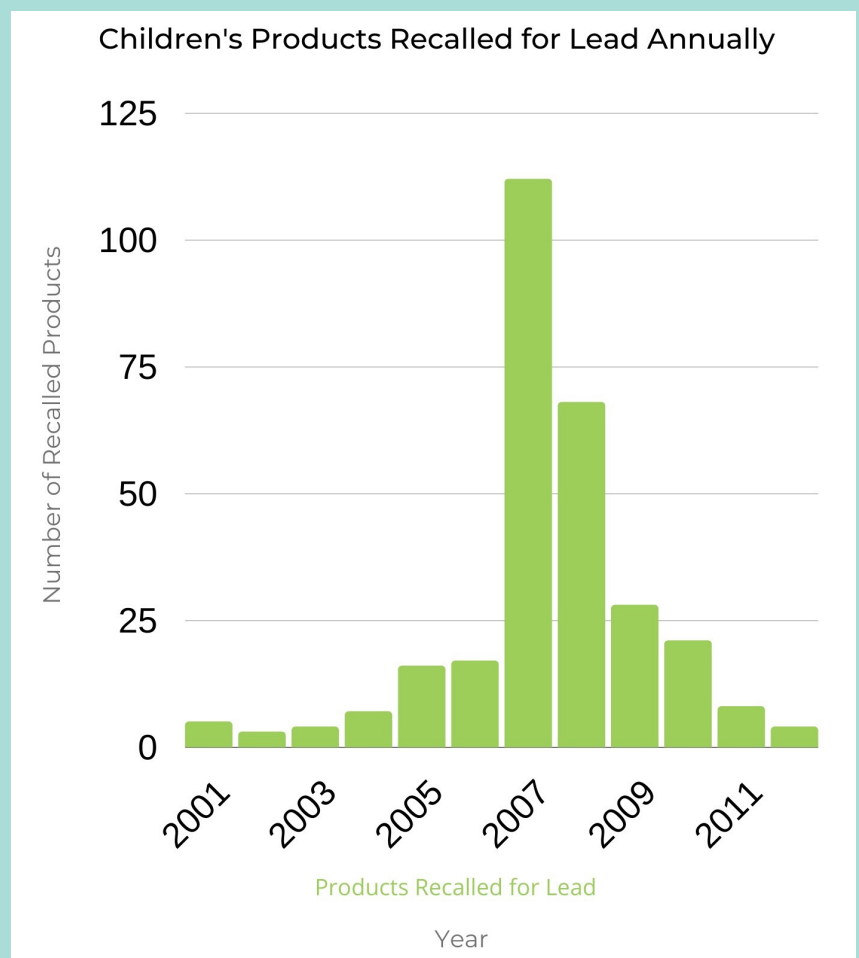


Figure 1. Impact of 2008 CPSIA on Curbing the Use of Lead in Commercial Merchandise

# CURRENT TRENDS

Last year, Amazon entered into a settlement with Washington state's Attorney General over "allegations that the company allowed school products on the platform that contained lead and cadmium above federal and state limits (WSJ).\" Upon further inspection, author Alexandra Berzon discovered that a children's xylophone listed on the website as FDA approved, contained almost four times the Federal lead limit, or 400 parts per million. The FDA does not approve or regulate children's products.

## THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

### Toys failing tests

4 PRODUCTS, including two labeled 'Amazon's Choice,' failed Journal-commissioned tests based on federal safety standards, according to the testing company. This xylophone contained lead levels exceeding federal limits.

4 of 10



*Figure 2. Berzon, Alexandra, Justin Scheck, and Shane Shifflett. "Amazon Has Ceded Control of Its Site. The Result: Thousands of Banned, Unsafe or Mislabeled Products." (August 23 , 2019).*

# CURRENT TRENDS

There was a **400% increase** in the rate of children's products recalled for lead when comparing January – May 2019 to January – May 2020. Between 2014 and 2019, an average of 3.5 children's products were recalled for lead annually. As of May 2020, the CPSC has recalled four children's products for excessive lead levels. If recalls continue at this rate, 2020 will mark a comeback in lead-laced merchandise.

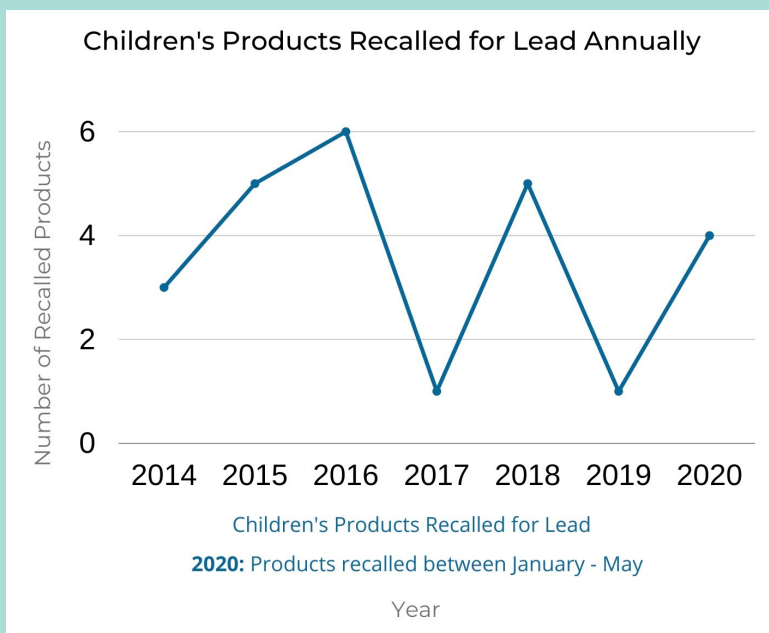


Figure 3. Children's Products Recalled for Excessive Lead Levels (2014-2020)

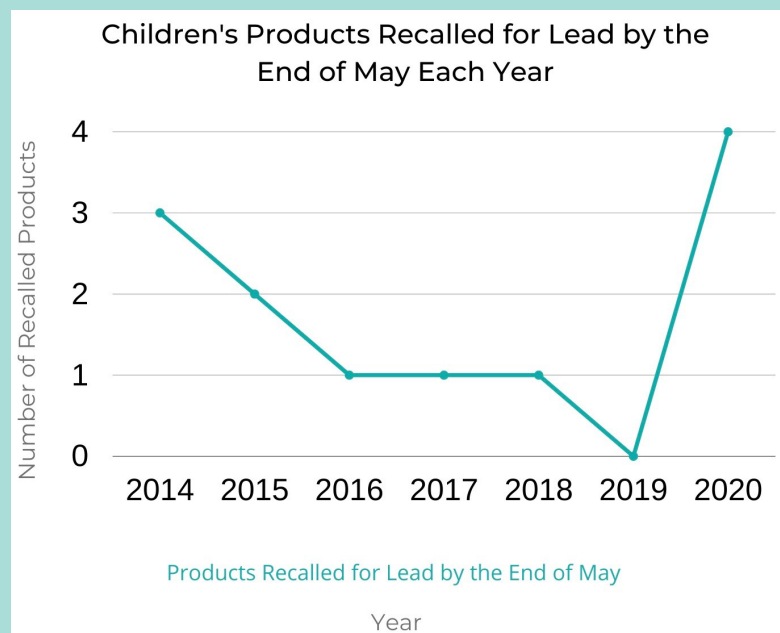


Figure 4. 400 Percent Increase in Children's Products Recalled for Lead (May 2019-May 2020)

Between June 1 - July 16, 2020, the CPSC recalled two commercial products for violating federal lead guidelines.

# CURRENT TRENDS

For children's products recalled for lead between 2014 and 2020, the toxin was found in paint or enamel, content or parts, and plastic. Because of the use of surface paint and softened plastic, toys (10 products), jewelry (4 products), and sports equipment (4 products) saw the most lead recalls between 2014 and 2020.

## Lead Recalls: 2014-2016

Product	Website	Phone
1. Minga Fair Trade Imports Wooden Flipping Acrobat Toys	www.mingaimports.com	(855) 738-5260
2. Discount School Supply Magnetic Color Sorting Board	www.discountschoolsupply.com	(800) 338-4430
3. FGX International Children's Sunglasses	www.fgxi.com	(877) 277-0104
4. Cycle Gear Wheelies Semi-truck	www.cyclegear.com	(800) 292-5343
5. Baby's Dream Cribs, Furniture and Accessories with Vintage Grey Paint Finish	www.babysdream.com	(800) 835-2742
6. Northern Tool + Equipment Little Digger Toy	www.northerntool.com	(888) 518-0339
7. Imagine Nation Books Pink Giraffe Animal Purse	www.booksarefun.com	(800) 917-0213
8. Pottery Barn Kids Avengers and Darth Vader Themed Water Bottles	www.potterybarnkids.com	(844) 421-8062
9. KHS America Monkey Glocksenspiel	www.gogreentones.com	(800) 283-4676
10. LaRose Industries Cra-Z-Jewelz Ultimate Gem Jewelry Machine	www.fareastbrokers.com	(855) 345-4693
11. Far East Brokers Chairs and Swings	www.fareastbrokers.com	(888) 753-9040
12. Things Remembered Silver Bracelets and Charm Necklaces	www.thingsremembered.com	(866) 902-4438
13. GSI Outdoors Insulated Water Bottles	www.llbean.com	(800) 555-9717
14. Mars Retail M&M'S-Branded Jewelry	www.mmsworld.com	(866) 915-5058

Kids In Danger | [kidsindanger.org](http://kidsindanger.org)

Figure 5. Children's Products Recalled for Violating Federal Lead Guidelines (2014-2016)

## Lead Recalls: 2017-2020

Product	Website	Phone
1. Active Kyds Children's Toy Shovels and Garden Tool Sets	www.activekyds.com	(855) 736-6255
2. Base Brands Reduce Hydro Pro Water Bottles	www.reduceeveryday.com	(833) 600-2887
3. BSN SPORTS Rubber Critter Toys	www.bsnsports.com	(888) 847-8816
4. INNOCHER Children's Musical Instruments Sets	www.myinnocheer.com	(866) 322-3361
5. Boy Scouts of America Neckerchief Slides	www.scoutshop.org	(800) 323-0736
6. H.I.S. Girl's Clothing Sets with Pendant Necklace	www.his-nyc.com	(800) 451-0285
7. Restoration Hardware Children's Chairs and Stools	www.restorationhardware.com	(800) 816-0969
8. Little Bambino 4 in 1 Canopy Children's Tricycles	www.grizzly.com	(888) 615-7944
9. Lilly of New York Children's Winter Boots	www.shoplittlebambino.com	(866) 633-8202
10. Grizzly Industrial Children's Tool Kits	www.zulily.com	(888) 359-1322
11. Ximi Vogue Children's Neck Pillow	www.ximivogueretail.com	(855) 946-4002

Kids In Danger | [kidsindanger.org](http://kidsindanger.org)

Figure 6. Children's Products Recalled for Violating Federal Lead Guidelines (2017-2020)

# LEAD: SYMPTOMS

CDC Symptom Checklist: Lead

KID



Fighting for Product Safety

Excessive Short Term Exposure

✓

Abdominal Pain

✓

Constipation

✓

Irritability

✓

Memory Loss

✓

Fatigue

✓

Headaches

✓

Loss of Appetite

✓

Pain or Tingling in Hands and Feet

✓

Weakness

Prolonged Lead Exposure

✓

Depression

✓

Distraction

✓

Nausea

✓

High Blood Pressure

✓

Heart Disease

✓

Kidney Disease

✓

Reduced Fertility

www.kidsindanger.org

When children are exposed to lead, they risk short and long-term damage to their health. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), children with acute exposure to large amounts of lead may suffer from abdominal pain, constipation, irritability, memory loss, fatigue, headache, loss of appetite, weakness, and pain or tingling in their hands and feet. Symptoms of prolonged lead exposure include depression, distraction, nausea, high blood pressure, heart disease, kidney disease, and reduced fertility.

Figure 7. Common Symptoms of Lead Poisoning (CDC)

7



# LEAD: SITES OF EXPOSURE

Most lead exposure comes from the environment, lead paint in older homes, or contaminated water. However, lead poisoning grows worse with repeat interactions over time. If a child has already come into contact with lead, then adding toxic toys to their environment makes things worse.

**Sites of Exposure**  
Fighting for Product Safety

**Most lead exposure is from the environment**

Contaminated soil, water, or lead paint

**Since lead exposure is cumulative, adding toxic toys to a child's environment increases the risk of irreversible damage to their health**

**If you suspect your child has been exposed to lead, seek medical attention**

**National Lead Information Center:**

1 (800) 424-LEAD [5323]

<https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/resources/default.htm>

[www.kidsindanger.org](http://www.kidsindanger.org)

Figure 8. Common Sites of Lead Exposure



# HOW CAN PARENTS PROTECT THE CHILDREN IN THEIR LIVES?

While all recalls are troubling, a product containing lead can threaten a child's health without caregivers even being aware it is in the product. KID urges parents and caregivers to be on the lookout for products recalled for or suspected of having lead levels that violate Federal standards.

Sign up for KID's monthly recall digest which will include children's products recalled for lead.

For recall updates and product safety information, follow @kidsindanger on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook.

***If you suspect your child has been exposed to lead, seek medical attention***