



# Shopping Safely When Buying Secondhand

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## Introduction

Since 2008, it has been illegal to sell recalled products in the United States. But on Facebook Marketplace, flea markets, and even in some consignment stores or sales, it is still possible to find recalled products for sale. Buying used products is a good way to save money on clothing, toys, and nursery products for young children, but shopping secondhand can inadvertently put your family in danger of recalled products or those that don't meet current standards.

To help provide guidance to secondhand shoppers, KID reached out to 14 nationwide secondhand retailers that had more than one location. While only a handful of the retailers responded, KID was able to draw additional information from the brand's website. KID included Facebook Marketplace since it is a well-known site for secondhand children's products.

Secondhand retailers are expected to follow U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) regulations on selling children's products. CPSC formulates helpful guidelines for secondhand sellers to inspect products and check their durability ([CPSC Resellers Guide](#)). KID's research found retailers such as Once Upon A Child, Cradle to College, Kids Haven Consignment Sale, Trading Hands, and Just Between Friends to be examples of retailers that upheld CPSC standards and educated customers.

In an interview with KID, Kami Snowbarger of Just Between Friends stated, "Our sale events have a trained recall specialist that checks for recalls during drop-off and during the sale event. We ask the consignors to check their items for recalls, but ultimately it is JBF's responsibility." Similarly, Kids Haven also relies on consistent inspection to make sure safe products are being resold. Kid Haven states on its website, "We do an initial inspection of consigned items when they are brought in. We also do several additional inspections during the days of organizing leading up to the opening day of the sale." Furthermore, Cradle to College enforces a contract system with sellers that requires them to sign that they have reviewed and checked their products according to CPSC standards. Of the 14 secondhand retailers reviewed, these mentioned above have the strongest policies for safety.

KID found a vast amount of safety information available on the websites of some secondhand retailers. When selling furniture, JBF uniquely attaches a tip-over prevention sheet and anchor kit to the furniture for sale and sells anchor kits for attendees who want them for additional furniture at home. On Cradle to College's and Kid Haven's websites, they too offer links to

databases, such as CPSC and KID for both buyers and sellers alike, specifically advising that their sellers and customers check these sites for recall and other safety information. KID found that 78% of secondhand retailers reviewed provided safety resources on their websites.

When reviewing secondhand retailers’ websites such as Duck Duck Goose, Trading Hands, Babies Tots n’ More, ConsignItMom, Mothers of Multiples, Facebook Marketplace, and Kids Closet Connection, there was no mention of checking for recalls, other safety measures or information on furniture restraints and overall safety. Facebook Marketplace does little to protect consumers from recalled products. Its website states, “Listings may not promote the buying or selling of recalled products. If you’re unsure whether the item you’re buying or selling has been recalled, look on the website of the item’s manufacturers or relevant government entity.” However, consumers are unable to tag a post as being a recalled product or report a seller who consistently offers recalled products. Furthermore, KID found franchises that do not provide a reliable source to check for recalls, such as Mothers of Multiples and Here We Grow Again. The complete responsibility is on the buyer. Without the proper resources and regulations in place, families risk bringing a dangerous product into their home.

## Methodology

KID graded each franchise/seller based on ten categories worth ten points each.

<i>Ten Categories of Secondhand Retailers Safety Standards</i>
<b>Product Inspection:</b> Are products inspected carefully for recalls and other safety issues?
<b>Providing Links:</b> Does the retailer offer resources for sellers and buyers on recalls and other safety issues?
<b>Tip-over Prevention:</b> Does the retailer offer information on tip-overs and anchoring and/or provide anchoring devices if furniture is sold?
<b>No Recalled Products:</b> Are recalled items accepted or offered for sale?
<b>Statement:</b> Is there a clear statement prohibiting recalled products or those that don’t meet current standards?
<b>Responsibility:</b> Who has final responsibility on the sale of recalled or unsafe products – the retailer or the consignor/donator?
<b>Accountability:</b> What system is in place to find and remove recalled products?
<b>Accessibility to Management:</b> Is contact information for safety questions clear and is management available to sellers and buyers to assist with safety issues?
<b>Consistency:</b> Does the system reflect the written rules and are the safety rules always applied, including across different franchise owners?
<b>Reviews:</b> Are there negative reviews for the retailer regarding safety and recalled products?

## Results

Below is a brief narrative for each of the 14 outlets, listed in order of their score on our rubric.

### **Just Between Friends**

The highest scorer on KID's assessment was Just Between Friends (JBF). JBF offers safety information such as Tip-over Prevention Sheets and has specific rules about large recalls such as the Fisher-Price Rock 'n Play and the Kids II Rocking Sleepers. JBF takes responsibility in making sure product sales are safe. They work with manufacturers to retrofit recalled products with the recall repair kit if available before sale. With no negative reviews, they received ten points in each category, resulting in a perfect score or A on the grading scale.

### **Cradle to College**

Cradle to College both requires consignors to sign a waiver that they have inspected their products for recalls and adherence to standards and has an inspection process to check themselves. They have files of recalled products and guidelines for products they accept. For example, they only accept new car seats and don't accept bouncy or rocker seats, or Bumbo seats without restraints. Staff members educate customers on tip-over prevention safety. They also received an A grade with a score of 95.

### **Once Upon a Child**

Once Upon A Child was found to be accountable and thorough in product inspection. Once Upon a Child states, "Stores ensure that all products meet mandatory and voluntary safety standards." Any recalled product is immediately pulled from the store shelf. Once Upon a Child received an A (90) on KID's grading scale.

### **Kids Haven**

Kids Haven has consignors check CPSC continuously throughout the inspection and sale process, starting from ten days before their sale to guarantee safety. Kids Haven, having shown consistency and accountability, was given an 85 or B on the grading scale.

### **Rhea Lana**

Rhea Lana is a national consignor that scored well on the rubric. Their website states, "We reserve the right to pull toys that we suspect have been recalled." Sellers are asked to sign a car seat waiver stating that the car seat is in good condition, has not been in an accident, and no more than five years old. Due to recalls being only mentioned for toys, not other products, Rhea Lana received an 80 or B on the grading scale.

### **Trading Hands**

It is troubling that Trading Hands requires that any infant's crib set sold contain crib bumpers. Crib bumpers poses a serious threat to the safety of infants. Trading Hands' inspection process is divided so that inspectors of specific sections of the sale can individually check children's products. Furthermore, Trading Hands does have an accountability process of penalizing those who bring faulty products. Thus, KID graded them 80, or a B and hope they will stop selling crib bumper pads.

### **ConsignItMom**

ConsignItMom states that it is the seller's responsibility to not sell recalled products but do not appear to have a process to hold them accountable or provide a resource for checking for recalls. KID graded them a D.

### **Babies, Tots n' More Consignment Sale**

Babies, Tots n' More Consignment Sale had extensive guidelines on what to sell and what not to sell. However, KID could not find any accountability or inspection process that ensured product safety. Although Babies, Tots n' More utilizes a quality inspection drop off process, it appeared to be focused on general quality rather than safety. Therefore, KID assigned them a D.

### **Duck Duck Goose**

Duck Duck Goose did not convey any information in regard to recalled products or safety. KID could not find a statement or inspection process detailing if the company evaluated the safety of resold products. Duck Duck Goose received an F on the grading scale.

### **Mothers of Multiples**

Mothers of Multiples had an array of online resources for parents or sellers to use to educate themselves on consumer safety, yet there was no clear process in which Mothers of Multiples upheld these standards themselves in their inspection process. Furthermore, KID did not see any rules against commonly recalled or unsafe products such as strollers, crib bumpers, drop-side cribs, etc. KID calculated an overall rating of an F.

### **Facebook Marketplace**

Facebook Marketplace is known for not holding sellers accountable for selling recalled products. KID has campaigned to persuade Facebook to input a monitoring process and as of date, the company has not done so. Facebook has only released a statement in their sellers' guide that recalled products must not be sold. Facebook does not include links or resources as to how to check this. Close to 800 million buyers per month are now susceptible to faulty and dangerous products from Facebook Marketplace. Facebook Marketplace received an F on KID's grading scale.

### **Here We Grow Again**

In evaluating Here We Grow Again, the subject of product safety was not recognized at all in their website. KID gave Here We Grow Again an overall rating of an F.

### **Kids Closet Connection**

Kids Closet Connection does not have any statements or protocols in regard to recalled products. While the consignment may have protocols in place regarding recalled products, it's not evident from their website, so KID gives Kids Closet Connection an incomplete grade.

## Mom2Mom Consignment

Mom2Mom Consignment’s website states they do not accept recalled products, older cribs or car seats but did not provide any information on recalls or safety. While the consignment may have protocols in place regarding recalled products, it’s not evident from their website, so KID gives Mom2Mom Consignment an incomplete grade.

## Grades for Safety Management Including Recalls

<b><u>Franchise Name</u></b>	<b><u>Score</u></b>	<b><u>Grade</u></b>
<i>JBF</i>	100	A
<i>Cradle to College</i>	95	A
<i>Once Upon A Child</i>	90	A
<i>Kids Haven</i>	85	B
<i>Rhea Lana</i>	80	B
<i>Trading Hands</i>	80	B
<i>Consignit Mom</i>	65	D
<i>BabiesTots</i>	60	D
<i>Duck Duck Goose</i>	55	F
<i>Mothers of Multiples</i>	50	F
<i>FB Marketplace</i>	25	F
<i>Here We Grow Again</i>	10	F
<i>Mom2Mom</i>	-	Incomplete
<i>Kids Closet Connection</i>	-	Incomplete

## Conclusion

KID urges families to shop safely from secondhand providers. This evaluation concluded that some sellers do not thoroughly inspect products for recalls and safety. To keep families safe, check CPSC’s recall website [cpsc.gov/recalls](http://cpsc.gov/recalls) to identify recalled products. Also check [SaferProducts.gov](http://SaferProducts.gov) if any incidents have been reported about the product. One search could help prevent a tragedy. Families and Caregivers can use KID’s [Buy Safe/Sell Safe Flyer](#) to keep children safe.