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Recalled Nursery Products and Magnets Account for High Number of Child Deaths: New KID Report

(CHICAGO) Today, Kids In Danger (KID) released its annual report, [Tracking Trends: Children's Product Recalls in 2021](#), analyzing the children's products recalled by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). The report found an alarmingly high number of deaths prior to recall (14) compared to zero deaths in 2020 prior to recall. This was the second highest number of reported deaths in the past ten years.

In 2021, 12 of the 14 total deaths prior to recall were associated with two nursery products, Boppy Loungers (eight deaths) and Fisher-Price 4-in-1 Rock 'n Glide Soothers (four deaths). Both products were recalled due to suffocation hazard.

Small, high-powered magnet sets also continue to be a hazard for children despite being marketed for adults. Zen Magnets and Neoballs Magnets was the product with the most units recalled (10 million units) after two children suffered injuries and one child died after ingestion. Ingestion of high-powered magnets can lead to severe intestinal damage.

"Babies continue to die in products that appear to assist getting babies to sleep but can be deadly if babies do fall asleep in them," said **KID Executive Director Nancy Cowles**. "The CPSC and manufacturers need to better market and clarify what products are tested to be safe for sleep and which are not. Simply slapping a warning on that it is not safe for sleep is not enough if it is marketed and intuitively used for sleep."

"KID's newest report is a wakeup call. We are continuing to see alarmingly high numbers of product related deaths and injuries prior to recall," said **Rep. Jan Schakowsky, Chair of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce**. "We can and must fix this. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) needs the power to decide when and how to communicate vital health and safety information about potentially dangerous products to consumers, and recalling companies need to work with CPSC to prioritize recall speed and effectiveness. I look forward to addressing these issues in my subcommittee, ideally in a bipartisan manner, including by passing the Sunshine in Product Safety Act to ensure that the CPSC can swiftly alert the public to potentially dangerous products."

"Recalled items should not appear on store shelves; however, they may still be available through secondhand sellers. Kids In Danger's annual report on 2021 recalled children's products will help consumers avoid buying recalled products for the children in their lives," **Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul** said. "I encourage parents, grandparents and guardians to use this free report to avoid inadvertently purchasing a dangerous product or to help identify hazardous products that may already be in their homes."

Additional findings of the report include:

- Children's product recalls continue a downward trend since 2010. The number of recalls this year (62) is not significantly lower than last year (63) but is lower than most years KID has collected data. The only other years that have had lower number of recalls were 2018 (53) and 2019 (58).

- In addition to deaths, injuries and incidents reported prior to the recall has also increased tremendously since last year. In 2021, there were 14 deaths, 136 injures, and 6,058 incidents prior recall, compared to 2020 in which there were no deaths, nine injuries, and 704 incidents.
- Social media usage by the CPSC and recalling companies to alert consumers about recalled products has remained low. In 2021, the CPSC posted 50% of children’s product recalls on Facebook, 40% on Twitter, and only 5% on Instagram. Recalling companies posted 44% of recalls on Facebook, 32% on Twitter, and 22% on Instagram.
- The CPSC’s monthly progress reports on how companies are undertaking recalls continue to be lackluster. KID filed 63 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests for recalls in 2020 and received very little data to analyze. Very few reports were fully completed (6) and available to the public and even this data was incomplete and unreliable.

“We thank KID for calling attention to recall effectiveness,” said **Abe Scarr, Director of Illinois PIRG**. “Too many consumers have recalled products in their homes unknowingly, some of which can cause serious injury or even death. We agree with KID that the Consumer Product Safety Commission and recalling companies should use the resources at their disposal to better promote recalls to the public, and that the Consumer Product Safety Commission prioritize recall effectiveness, including making recall effectiveness metrics public.”

"While it's disappointing that recall numbers continue to increase, we are encouraged by and fully support Kids In Danger's (KID) recommendations," said **April Janney, President and CEO of Illinois Action for Children**. "Better leveraging social media to broadcast recall notices will make it possible to reach even more parents and providers with this potentially life-saving information. I look forward to continuing our work with KID to create a safer environment within home and child care programs across the state of Illinois."

KID recommends the following:

- Policymakers should ban small high-powered magnets to protect children from life-threatening injuries and death.
- Recalling companies and the CPSC need to prioritize recall effectiveness, which currently appears to be an afterthought. One easy step is by posting all recalls on social media. While the CPSC and companies may post recalls on Instagram stories, they should also alert consumers as Instagram posts so they will be available even after 24 hours.
- Congress should pass the Sunshine in Product Safety Act which would repeal the current gag order placed on the CPSC which prevents the agency from disclosing life-saving product safety information to the public.
- The CPSC must improve its capabilities to provide recall effectiveness data both through the FOIA process and by making recall effectiveness metrics public. There is a lack of transparency in the recall process to consumers and is difficult to measure how effectively the CPSC and companies are undertaking recalls.
- Sign up for KID’s monthly newsletter which includes a list of children’s product recalls at www.KidsInDanger.org.
- Report problems with children’s products to the manufacturer and to the CPSC at SaferProducts.gov, and check for recalls and safety incident reports at SaferProducts.gov.

Read the full report [here](#).

Kids In Danger (KID) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting children by fighting for product safety. KID’s mission is to save lives by enhancing transparency and accountability through safer product development, better education, and stronger advocacy for children. www.kidsindanger.org