



DECEMBER IS SAFE TOYS AND GIFTS AWARENESS MONTH

Here are some safety tips to keep in mind when shopping for toys this holiday season

- Inspect all toys before purchasing. Avoid those that shoot or include parts that fly off. The toy should have no sharp edges or points and should be sturdy enough to withstand impact without breaking, being crushed, or being pulled apart easily.
- Be diligent about inspecting toys your child has received. Check them for age, skill level, and developmental appropriateness before allowing them to be played with.
- Look for labels that assure you the toys have passed a safety inspection – “ATSM” means the toy has met the American Society for Testing and Materials standards.
- Gifts of sports equipment should always be accompanied by protective gear (give a helmet with the skateboard)
- Keep kids safe from lead in toys by: Educating yourself about lead exposure from toys, symptoms of lead poisoning, and what kinds of toys have been recalled; being aware that old toys may be more likely to contain lead in the paint; having your children wash their hands frequently and calling your doctor if you suspect your child has been exposed to lead.
- High-powered magnet sets are dangerous and should be kept away from children. Whether marketed for children or adults, building and play sets with small magnets should also be kept away from small children.
- Do NOT give toys with small parts (especially magnets or “button” batteries which can cause serious injury or death if ingested) to young children as they tend to put things in their mouths, increasing the risk of choking. If the piece can fit inside a toilet paper roll, it is not appropriate for kids under age three.
- Do NOT give toys with ropes and cords or heating elements.
- Do NOT give crayons and markers unless they are labeled “nontoxic”.
- Children can choke or suffocate on deflated or broken balloons. Keep deflated balloons away from children younger than eight years old. Discard broken balloons immediately.
- For children younger than age three, avoid toys with small parts, which can cause choking.
- Riding toys, skateboards and in-line skates go fast, and falls could be deadly. Helmets and safety gear should be always worn properly and they should be sized to fit.

Once gifts are open:

- Immediately discard plastic wrapping or other toy packaging before the wrapping and packaging become dangerous playthings.
- Keep toys appropriate for older children away from younger siblings.
- Battery charging should be supervised by adults. Chargers and adapters can pose thermal burn hazards to young children. Pay attention to instructions and warnings on battery chargers. Some chargers lack any mechanism to prevent overcharging.