



Kentucky Public Health
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Give the Gift of Safety This Holiday Season *52 Weeks of Public Health Spotlight: Toy Safety Awareness Month*



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FRANKFORT, Ky. (December 18, 2017) – As part of the 52 Weeks of Public Health campaign, the Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH) within the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) is recognizing Toy Safety Awareness Month during this holiday season.

Around the holidays there is a lot of excitement and desire to get your child’s favorite toy from their holiday wish list. With thousands of toys to choose, selecting the perfect gift for your little one can be challenging. Although toys are intended to be fun and enjoyable, there are some health risks associated with toys that are not made properly.

Dr. Henrietta Bada, Maternal and Child Health Director stated, “The joy of giving a toy to a child at the holidays can be a favorite moment enjoyed by all. To ensure this joy does not become a tragedy, family and friends need to review the recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics and Safe Kids before buying a toy for a child or allowing a child to play with a new toy.”

Before you make a purchase, the Kentucky Department for Public Health encourages all shoppers to make safe toys a priority this holiday season by following the recommendations for the American Academy of Pediatrics and Safe Kids:

- Select a toy that is age appropriate, and fits the abilities of the child;
- Look for toys to engage creativity such as books, puzzles, wooden trains, building sets;
- Infants and children explore their environment through taste and touch. If the piece of the toy can fit inside a toilet paper roll, it poses a choking hazard for children under the age of 3;
- Choose toys for babies that will build developmental skills such as shape sorters, stacking blocks, baby puzzles, and textured books designed for an infant;
- For teenagers, if giving an electronic device, think about the purpose of the electronic device, how the device will be used, the rules for accessing the internet and websites as well as who will monitor the devices use;
- Be cautious of toys containing batteries or magnets. Both are choking hazards and can cause serious stomach problems, or even death, when eaten by children. Be mindful that buttons batteries may be in musical greeting cards, toy building sets, and remote controls;
- Be cautious when keeping toys intended for adult use in areas frequented by children;
- Be cautious when charging toys in an electrical outlet. Chargers also pose a fire risk and should not be left plugged in and unattended. Children under age 10 should not be given toys that require being plugged into an electrical outlet due to a risk of burns and electrical shocks;
- Balloons that are uninflated or pieces of balloons that have burst can create suffocation or choking hazards.
- Remove tags, strings and ribbons from toys for young children. If the string is greater than 12 inches long it can pose a strangulation hazard for babies;
- Read the labels and instructions of use on a toy and teach the child how to safely use the toy to prevent injury;
- Keep toys for older children stored separately from those intended for a younger child;
- Include a helmet for use when giving a bicycle, scooter, horse, skateboards or anything that rolls and could be ridden by a child; and
- Gifts that use “kid power” to operate, promote movement, developmental growth and protect children from obesity. Look for gifts that promote a child to run, play, dance, or jump.

For more information regarding toy safety this holiday season, please visit the following websites:

- <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/news-features-and-safety-tips/Pages/Toy-Safety-Tips-from-the-American-Academy-of-Pediatrics.aspx>
- <https://www.childrensafetynetwork.org/blog/tis-season-toy-safety>
- <https://www.safekids.org/tip/toy-safety-tips>

Interested in learning more about healthy Kentucky lifestyle? Through our 52 Weeks of Public Health campaign, the Kentucky Department for Public Health will spotlight public health issues as well as highlight services and resources available to Kentuckians statewide. Follow us on [Facebook](#) for your weekly tip.