

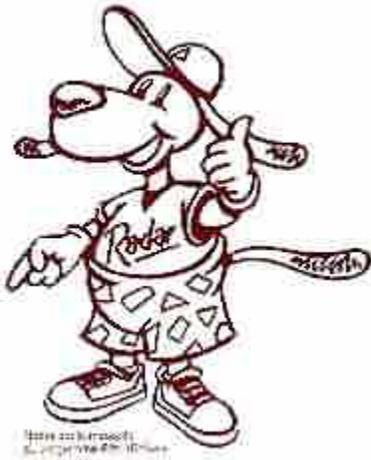


Short Safety Subject

Short Safety Subjects are provided by the Public Safety Business Center, Fort Bragg, NC. Our intent is to provide safety topics for the purpose of increasing safety awareness and improving safety performance. Additional Short Safety Subjects are available on the PSBC Business Management Web Site at:

www.bragg.army.mil/psbc-bm/PubsAndForms/ShortSafetySubjects.htm

Toy Safety



At each stage of their development, children face new challenges and different risks. By being aware of the kinds of dangers associated with toys at different stages of development, you can better protect children while ensuring their safe enjoyment of their toys. At least a quarter of a million children are treated for injuries in hospitals every year and tragically, about a thousand die from their injuries - more than any other cause.

Babies learn by putting things into their mouths and are at a high risk for choking on toys. Many reports of choking involve infants or toddlers who were playing with rattles and squeeze toys. Marbles and small balls are also a hazard.

Parental supervision is key. Toys meant for older children, especially those with small parts, should be kept away from small children.

When a baby is crawling or just learning to walk, toy boxes and toy chests can be dangerous traps and heavy lids can slam shut on small children. Well supported lids with sturdy hinges and plenty of holes for ventilation can eliminate such risks.

Tricycles and riding toys are hazardous for toddlers since they don't have well-developed coordination and injuries are common when using these toys. Choose age appropriate toys and make sure they ride in safe places.

Projectile toys and toys with parts that can fly appeal to school-aged children and can cause a variety of injuries, especially eye injuries. Supervise play with this type of toy and teach children never to aim projectiles at anyone.

Balloons are great fun, but they pose the greatest choking hazard for children of all ages. Always blow up balloons for children and never allow them to chew on uninflated balloons or broken pieces.

An Ounce of Prevention...

Before buying children's toys:

- use the recommended age labeling as a guide and buy only toys suitable for the child's age group;
- avoid toys with sharp points or edges;
- check rigid eyes and noses on soft toys and make sure they cannot be pulled off;
- make sure small parts of larger toys, such as wheels on toy cars, are secure and cannot break off.

After buying:

- look for safety messages on toy packaging and follow all instructions;
- throw away all toy packaging, such as plastic, cellophane and styrofoam;
- teach your child to use the toy properly;
- throw away broken toys that cannot be fixed;
- make sure that batteries in toys are properly installed;
- do not allow a child to sleep with a battery-operated toy;
- supervise children playing with balloons and throw away pieces of broken balloons;
- remove toys and mobiles strung across cribs and playpens when baby begins to push up with hands and knees;
- teach children to put their toys away,
- inspect toys regularly