



News Release

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CONGRESS PUTTING THE FUN BACK INTO TOYS

Agreement to protect children from harmful toys and products will give parents new reassurance after series of product recalls, says American Academy of Pediatrics President Renée R. Jenkins

WASHINGTON, D.C.—A ground-breaking agreement to ensure the safety of all children’s toys and products *before* they end up in nurseries and playrooms will go a long way toward easing the fears and worries about hidden dangers in the items children use every day, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), which represents 60,000 pediatricians.

Calling the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act “extraordinary,” AAP President Renée R. Jenkins, MD, FAAP, praised the U.S. House of Representatives for swiftly approving the agreement today. She urged the Senate to act quickly as well to speed the bill to the president for his signature.

“Champions of product safety in the House and the Senate did an extraordinary job of making this legislation even stronger than it was initially,” Jenkins said. “For the first time ever, products aimed at children age 12 and younger will be tested before they hit store shelves for hidden safety hazards, such as dangerous magnets, toxins, harmful noise and much more. Parents won’t have to worry about their children’s toys and products containing harmful levels of lead and phthalates.”

AAP successfully led efforts to ban lead in toys, providing expertise to lawmakers and testifying three times on lead and other safety issues. Under the bill, all but traces of lead will be banned in toys and children’s products sold in the United States. Within three years, lead levels in toys will drop to 100 ppm (parts per million), the lowest level set by any nation in the world.

Other key provisions AAP advocated for include:

- Applying the new safety standards to toys aimed at children age 12 and under;
- Pre-market testing and safety certification of toys and children’s products;
- Mandatory safety standards for such potential hazards as toxins, magnets, sharp edges, noise levels and more;
- CPSC authority to more closely scrutinize safety of ATVs (all terrain vehicles), taking into account such issues as children’s size and developmental capabilities.

In addition, the legislation creates a new database that will allow parents to research potential safety problems before purchasing products, bans three types of phthalates that have been linked to reproductive system abnormalities, and ensures that companies cannot export unsafe products to other countries. It also strengthens the Consumer Product Safety Commission, boosting its budget substantially to ensure it can provide the safety oversight required by the law.

“After years of horrific reports of harm caused by children’s products, this legislation will go a long way toward giving parents the reassurance they deserve,” Jenkins said. “Congress has put the fun back into toys.”

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