

# Safe Toys and Gifts

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) *Toy-Related Deaths and Injuries, Calendar Year 2009* report:

- \* In 2009, an estimated 250,100 toy-related injuries were treated in U.S. emergency rooms
- \* An estimated 185,900 (or 74 percent) occurred to children less than 15 years of age, while an estimated 90,600 (36 percent) occurred to children younger than 5 years of age
- \* Males accounted for 58 percent (144,700) of the treated injuries
- \* 45 percent of the total injuries were to the head and face, including the eyes, mouth and ear
- \* 46 percent of injuries were classified as lacerations, contusions and abrasions
- \* Ninety-six percent of the emergency department treated toy-related injury victims were treated

## Prevent Blindness Mid-Atlantic recommends the following:

- \* Inspect toys for safe construction. Products given to young children should be made of durable plastic or wood with no sharp edges or points. The toys should be able to withstand impact. Avoid purchasing toys with small parts for young children, as they tend to put items in their mouths, increasing their risk of choking.
- \* Check your children's toys regularly for broken parts. Throw broken toys out immediately if they cannot be safely repaired. Older kids often alter their toys and misuse them, making them unsafe. It is better to be vigilant, even with older kids, so that serious eye injuries can be prevented.
- \* Read the instructions and the suggested age level on the packaging. Assess whether the item is appropriate for the child's ability and age. Age labeling is provided not just for developmental reasons, but for safety reasons as well.
- \* Avoid toys that shoot projectiles such as toy guns – they contribute to a large number of serious eye injuries and can rob children of their sight.
- \* Look for the symbol ASTM F963. This indicates the product meets the national safety standards set by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM).
- \* Make recommendations to family members and friends about gifts that you feel are appropriate for your child.
- \* Stay aware of recalled products. Large toy retailers post regular notices of recalled toys, usually at the front of stores. Take recalled products back to the store where they were purchased for a full refund. For further information on toy and product recalls, visit the U.S. Product Safety Commission Web site at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov).



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[www.PBMastarpupils.org](http://www.PBMastarpupils.org)

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