

# Pointers for Parents

## Bunk Beds Safer Than Ever, But Caution Still Needed

(NAPSA)—Bunk beds sold in the United States today are safer than ever, but parents still need to exercise caution to prevent bunk bed-related injuries among children and adolescents.

“Bunk beds remain a popular choice when furnishing a child’s room,” says Jackie Hirschhaut, vice president, American Home Furnishings Alliance (AHFA). “However, when bunk beds—or any other beds in the house—are used for play instead of sleep, accidents can and will occur.”

AHFA offers this bunk bed safety checklist:

- Bunk beds are not recommended for children under age 6. Children under age 6 should not be permitted to play unattended in a room with a bunk bed.

- The top bunk should have guardrails, with no more than 15 inches open at one end for exiting and entering.

- Rails should be secure and sturdy, and they should extend at least five inches above the top surface of the mattress.

- The mattress should be the proper size, as instructed by the manufacturer.

- Always use a sturdy ladder to enter and leave the top bunk. Keep the ladder free of toys, clothes or other obstructions.

- Only one person should be on the top bunk at a time.

- Prohibit horseplay on, under or around beds.

- Never allow children to



**This double-size bunk bed has smooth styling and safe design at about \$1,699. [www.youngamerica.com](http://www.youngamerica.com).**

attach or hang items to any part of the bunk bed—for example, hooks, belts, jump ropes, etc.

- Bunk beds manufactured after March 2008 may not have any type of “finial” or corner post on the headboard or footboard. This is to help prevent accidental strangulation caused by something the child is wearing or carrying catching on the bed as the child exits the upper bunk.

- Never position a bunk bed under or near a ceiling fan or ceiling light fixture.

- Remember to reinforce safety rules regularly, especially when your child has an overnight guest who may be unfamiliar with bunk bed hazards.

For the complete Consumer Product Safety Commission Safety Specification for Bunk Beds, go to [www.cpsc.gov/volstd/bunkbed/bunkbed.html](http://www.cpsc.gov/volstd/bunkbed/bunkbed.html).