



Holiday Hints

Top Tips For Buying Safe Toys

by Joan Lawrence

(NAPSA)—For happier holidays with your family, here are answers to parents' most frequently asked questions about toy safety:

Q. How do I pick out safe toys?

A. Choose a toy that matches your child's age and interests. Always follow the age grading on toy packaging and be sure to keep toys labeled 3+ away from children under 3. These toys may contain small parts, which are a choking hazard.



Make sure the toys you give are right for the child's age, abilities and interests.

Q. Are certain toy brands safer than others?

A. All toys sold in the U.S. must comply with strict federal safety standards. So when you shop at a reputable retailer, you can feel confident that the toys sold in the establishment are safe.

Q. Is it safe to buy a toy from a seller I'm not familiar with?

A. Whether online or in person, shop only at retailers you know and trust. Store staff at established businesses will be knowledgeable about the toys on their shelves and websites. Exercise caution when buying toys at flea markets, garage sales and unknown online sellers, as these vendors may not be monitoring for recalled products.

Q. How do I find out if a toy has been recalled?

A. Only 0.003 percent of the 3 billion toys sold each year are recalled. Stay informed by visiting PlaySafe.org for a current list of recalled products.

Q. What's your last piece of advice for parents?

A. Always supervise your children at play and demonstrate the correct way to use a toy or game.

For more tips on toy safety, visit www.PlaySafe.org, now available in English and Spanish.

• *Ms. Lawrence, the "Toy Safety Mom," is a lifelong child safety advocate with more than 20 years of experience in the toy industry and senior vice president of standards and regulatory affairs at The Toy Association.*