

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Holiday Toy Shopping Safety Tips

National Safety Council Guidelines for Children's Gifts

Each year, more than 3 billion toys and games are sold in the United States. About 65 percent of these sales occur between Thanksgiving and Christmas. According to [the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's \(CPSC\) latest study](#), there were 12 toy-related deaths in children under 15 and 250,100 toy-related injuries treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms in 2009. CPSC states in the report that this indicates "a statistically significant increasing trend in the estimated numbers of toy-related injuries," since 2005.

"The holidays are a wonderful time for celebration, gift-giving and play—no one wants to be in the emergency room with an injured child. Following these toy safety guidelines will help Nebraskans enjoy a safe and joyful holiday season," said Kay Farrell, National Safety Council, Nebraska, president.

National Safety Council, Nebraska, offers these tips for toy and game shopping this holiday season:

- Before shopping for toys, consider the child's age, interest, skill level and development. An inappropriate toy for a particular child can be dangerous.
- Keep toys with small parts away from children under age 3. They can choke on small toys or parts that come apart or break off. To determine if a toy or toy part is too small, see if it will fit through the hole of a paper towel roll. If it fits, it is a choking hazard.
- Bikes, scooters or skate boards make great holiday gifts. But remember that a properly fitting helmet is a necessity, not an accessory, when it comes to wheeled sports.
- When shopping with children, consider alternatives to putting children in shopping carts, including strollers and carts that have plastic mini-cars or trucks attached to them. Carts hold many risks for children, including falling out or getting run over, especially in a crowded store. If you must use a cart, make sure your child stays seated and is secured by a seat belt.
- If you buy a bike from a large general retailer, you may want to take it to a bike retailer to check its assembly, or buy a bike not assembled and take it to the bike retailer for assembly.
- Shopping at a second-hand shop this holiday season? Check recalls.gov to make sure kids' products and toys are safe and haven't been recalled. Toy manufacturers often provide their own recall lists:
 - Mattel Toys: Service.Mattel.com/us/recall.asp
 - Hasbro Toys: Hasbro.com/customer-service/recall/index.cfm

- Toy Industry Foundation Inc.: Toy-Tia.org
- U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission: www.cpsc.gov (You can also sign up for recall alerts to be sent automatically to your e-mail here.)

About the National Safety Council, Nebraska

Founded in 1924 and formerly known as National Safety Council, Greater Omaha Chapter, the National Safety Council, Nebraska, is a private non-profit, community based organization that promotes safety and health by providing programs, resource services and education to individuals and organizations to prevent and reduce both the personal and economic loss associated with injuries, accidents and health hazards wherever they exist. Through its leadership, the greater Omaha five-county area acquired the Safe Community designation by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2007. For more information, visit www.safenebraska.org.