

Crib Safety Tips and Recall Information



consumer**brief**

WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

Nothing is more important to parents than the safety and welfare of their children. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs find that it is necessary to inform all parents about the potentially deadly hazards of drop-side cribs. Drop-side cribs have a movable side that slides down to a lower position. Other cribs have movable sides where the top portion of the side folds down to permit easier access to the inside of the crib.

Between 2000 and 2010, the CPSC learned of 32 infant and toddler suffocation and strangulation deaths that were caused by or related to drop-side detachments on cribs made by various manufacturers. In addition, during that period the CPSC received 14 reports of infant fatalities due to entrapment in cribs that could be related to a drop side, but the information obtained in those cases was insufficient to determine if a drop side was involved.

Some of the reported deaths occurred because the drop side became detached without the caregivers noticing the detachment; others occurred after a consumer tried to repair the detached drop side but the repair ultimately failed; and others happened because consumers installed the drop side or drop-side hardware incorrectly. In several of these tragic incidents, the caregivers made serious errors when putting the crib together due to incorrect or confusing instructions. Sometimes the drop side still appeared to function as was intended, but the stress on the crib's hardware led to the drop-side detachment.

STRONG NEW CRIB SAFETY STANDARDS

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission voted unanimously to approved new mandatory standards for full-size and non full-size baby cribs as mandated by the Consumer Safety Improvement Act of 2008 (CPSIA). The federal crib standards had not been updated in nearly 30

years and these new rules are expected to usher in a safer generation of cribs.

CPSC has recalled more than 11 million dangerous cribs since 2007, primarily because detaching drop-side cribs rails and faulty or defective hardware were associated with infants suffocation and strangulation.

The new mandatory crib standards will:

- stop the manufacture and sales of dangerous, traditional drop-side cribs;
- make mattress supports stronger;
- make crib hardware more durable; and
- make test safety more rigorous.

Effective June 2011, cribs manufactured, sold, or leased in the United States must comply with the new federal standards. Effective 24 months after the rule is published, child care homes and infant Head Start centers and places of public accommodation, such as hotels and motels, must have compliant cribs in their facilities.

The full-size and non full-side cribs standards adopted the current ASTM International (formerly known as the American Society for Testing and Materials) voluntary standards with additional technical modifications.

For more information about the recalled cribs go to: www.cpsc.gov.

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HOW CAN I DETERMINE WHETHER THE CRIB I'VE PURCHASED FOR MY BABY IS SAFE?

Before using any crib, be sure to check the recall list cited on the previous page. Avoid old cribs because they usually do not meet current safety standards. Follow the assembly instructions provided by the manufacturer carefully, taking the time to make sure each part is installed correctly. If you do not understand the directions, or if a part does not fit right or if you have leftover hardware, call the manufacturer for assistance. **DO NOT** use the crib unless these issues have been resolved.

Be sure that all of the visible hardware used for assembling the crib - every screw, bolt, track and clamp - is securely in place. Tighten any hardware that has come loose. **DO NOT** continue to use any crib with missing, broken or loose parts. **DO NOT** try to fix broken cribs.

Do-it-yourself crib repair can lead to deadly consequences. About 30 percent of crib deaths each year are caused by missing hardware, broken or nonworking parts, or ineffective repairs.

IMPORTANT CRIB SAFETY TIPS TO KEEP IN MIND

- The longer a crib is used, the more wear and tear there will be on hardware and joints, allowing screws to loosen and fall out and plastic parts to flex and break.
- Repeated assembly and disassembly increases the likelihood that crib parts will be damaged or destroyed.
- Wood warps and shrinks over time and glue can become brittle. These problems can lead to joint and slat failures.

TIPS TO ENSURE A SAFE SLEEP FOR BABIES AND TODDLERS

Babies spend much of their time sleeping; therefore, the nursery should be the safest room in the house.

With any crib, bassinet or play yard, following a few simple rules will keep babies sleeping safely and will give parents a better night's sleep:

- Always place your baby on his or her back to sleep, for naps and at night. The back sleep position is the safest, and every sleep time counts. The American Academy of Pediatrics and the CPSC strongly urges parents to put babies to sleep on their backs on an empty crib free from blankets,

pillows and stuff animals. This is the safest way to prevent SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome). Flattening of the head or reflux were not reasons to change the baby's sleeping position.

- Also, make sure there are not gaps larger than two fingers between the sides of the crib and the mattress.
- Do not use cribs older than 10 years or broken or modified cribs. Infants can strangle to death if their bodies pass through gaps between loose components or broken slats while heads remain entrapped.
- Set up play yards properly according to manufacturers' directions. Only use the mattress pad provided with the play yard; do not add extra padding.
- Never place a crib near a window with blind cords, curtain cords or baby monitor cords; babies can strangle on cords.

If you know of any defective baby furniture or other products, please, call the CPSC to the toll-free number: **1-800-638-2772**.

Consumers who have questions or problems with issues related to products or businesses in New Jersey can contact the N.J. Division of Consumer Affairs at: **1-800-242-5846** (*toll-free within N.J.*) or **973-504-6200**.



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