



Nottinghamshire  
County Council  
Community Services

# Trading Standards *Information*

## Buying Safe Toys

Choosing the right toy and making sure it is safe to play with are very important in helping your children get the most out of their play. Most toys on sale in Britain today meet tough safety standards. This leaflet will help you avoid any that do not and help you choose the right toy for your child.

### Things to check when buying Toys

#### 1. Place of Purchase

Always try to buy toys from a reputable shop. They are more likely to ensure that the toys they sell are safe, and you are likely to receive good help and advice.

#### 2. Quality of workmanship

Good manufacturers, who care about quality, are more likely to care about safety.

#### 3. Construction

Look out for; sharp or rough edges or points; hinges and small mechanisms that may trap fingers; small parts that may choke a child.

#### 4. Safety and other markings

Toys must have the name and address of the manufacturer or importer. They should also have the CE mark, which shows that the toy complies with European safety standards. Toys may also have another safety mark such as the British Lion Mark or the British Kitemark.

#### 5. Warnings and age suitability

Do not ignore warnings. **Always** take notice of warning labels such as "*not suitable for children under 36 months because of small parts*". Toys bought for older children may contain small parts, so should be kept away from younger brothers and sisters. Parents could help by making separate spaces for such toys and encouraging children to tidy their toys away safely.

#### 6. Electrical Toys

When buying electrical toys that are designed to be plugged into the mains supply, make sure that they come with an attached plug.

*Please turn over...*

<b>Trading Standards</b> County Hall West Bridgford Nottingham NG2 7QP <b>Tel: 08450 505 200</b>	<b>Trading Standards</b> 16 Regent Street Mansfield Nottinghamshire NG18 1SS <b>Tel: 08450 505 200</b>	<b>Trading Standards</b> 2 Middle Gate Newark Nottinghamshire NG24 1AG <b>Tel: 08450 505 200</b>	<b>Trading Standards</b> 17B The Square Retford Nottinghamshire DN22 6DB <b>Tel: 08450 505 200</b>
<b>Website: <a href="http://www.consumercomplaints.org.uk">www.consumercomplaints.org.uk</a></b>		<b>Minicom: 0115 9772395</b>	

## **Choosing Toys**

Children need toys and games. They learn by playing and doing. You should try to choose a toy that will stimulate and stretch your child without being too difficult.

Some toys carry labels such as "*Recommended for children aged 4 -5*" or "*play age 5 -7*". These can help you decide if the toy would suit your child. Of course you will be in the best position to decide whether your child will be stimulated or bored by a toy.

## **Using Toys**

The foreword to the European Standard (EN71) says that "*the requirements of the Standard do not release parents and educators from their responsibility of watching over the child while he or she is playing*". Parents, teachers and other carers need to make sure that their children are safe when playing with any toy.

Even a toy that has passed the safety standards can be used by a child in a way which could cause accidents or injury. For example, any toy could be used to hit another child, or left on the stairs for someone to fall over.

## **After Purchase**

- Dispose of packaging safely, some types of packaging can be dangerous to children. Make sure that plastic bags or similar material is thrown away safely.
- Keep instructions, safety information and details of the manufacturer, you may need them later. Check the toy is working properly and is safe.
- Do not give broken or damaged toys to children.
- Do not mix old and new batteries in a toy, this can lead to overheating. Remove the batteries if the toy is not played with for more than one week. Check the batteries regularly.
- Check the toys regularly after purchase. Repair or throw away broken toys.

## **Toys and Trading Standards**

If you have bought a toy which you later find out may be dangerous, contact your local Trading Standards Office. They will be able to offer advice, have the toy tested and take appropriate action, which may mean prosecuting the supplier.

Trading Standards Officers regularly sample toys and have them tested to make sure that they meet the requirements of the safety standards.

Nottinghamshire County Council Trading Standards Advice Centres offer unbiased and friendly advice to both consumers and traders. If you need help or just want some general advice, why not call in to your local centre, or telephone the advice line.

**All our information leaflets are available in a range of formats, including tape, large print or Braille. They can also be translated into any main language spoken in Nottinghamshire. If this would be useful to you please contact us on 0115 9773389.**