

## *TOY SAFETY BUYING TIPS: Be Safe, Not Sorry*

### **Trap**

Susan remembers when lawn darts, trampolines, puzzles, Pogo balls and air rifles were popular birthday and holiday gifts for kids. Today, she wonders how she survived her childhood! Susan plans to begin shopping for toys and take advantage of seasonal sales year-round to avoid the frenetic crowds of the holidays. She wants to save money but also wants to buy toys that will be safe for her kids.

### **Tips**

Along with being fun, toys should be safe. Here are some tips for a happier holiday:

- Consider the child's age, interest and skill level. Look for labels that give age recommendations as a guide. The Child Safety Protection Act requires choking hazard warning labels on toys containing small parts. Remember a toy intended for an older child may be dangerous in the hands of a younger child. Information on age-appropriate toys can be found at <http://www.usa.safekids.org> and <http://www.cpsc.gov>.
- Buy from a reputable retailer, and ask if they have removed all recalled toys from the shelves. Get a receipt for your purchase and verify the store's return policy.
- Be extra cautious when buying second-hand or used toys. Look for signs that state all sales are final. The Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act also prohibits thrift shops, garage sales, consignment and online stores from selling recalled toys. Toys can be recalled for reasons such as toxic levels of lead in the paint or a strangulation risk (cords) or a choking hazard (small parts).
- You can see the recalled toys list and sign up for e-mail alerts at the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Web site <http://www.cpsc.gov>.
- If you decide to buy your child's first big bicycle, remember it's not a toy. That big bike is now considered a vehicle, and your next purchase should be a helmet!

**For more information, contact Palm Beach County Consumer Affairs at  
561-712-6600 (Boca/Delray 888-852-7362 toll free)  
[www.pbcgov/consumer](http://www.pbcgov/consumer)**