Play With Confidence, Gift With Care – Safe Toy and Gift Month

Every year in December, Safe Toys and Gifts Month is observed to raise awareness on the importance of selecting non-toxic, age-appropriate, and well-constructed toys to prevent injuries.

The holiday season, when gift giving peaks, also highlights common hazards like choking on small parts, cord strangulations, sharp edge laceration, battery ingestion, and chemical exposure.

Purpose and Importance

The Children's Safety Network reports that every year, more than 200,000 children are treated in emergency rooms in the U.S for toy-related injuries. This is a preventable issue that through careful selection and supervision and advocacy for stricter safety regulation and manufacturing, can reduce the amount of toy and gift injuries among children.

Safe Toys and Gifts Month serves as a reminder to consider safety first when buying toys and gifts, especially during the holiday season. The goal is to reduce the number of toy-related injuries by encouraging the selection of age-appropriate, non-toxic, and well-constructed toys that adhere to safety standards. This month is also a time to raise awareness about potential hazards such as small parts, sharp edges, and toxic materials.

History of Safe Toys & Gifts Month

Safe Toys & Gifts Month was established in 1975 by Prevent Blindness to educate consumers about toy safety and the potential risks associated with certain toys and gifts. The campaign emphasizes the importance of making informed choices when selecting items for children and prioritizing their safety above all else.

Since then, Safe Toys and Gifts Month has grown in recognition, with numerous organizations, health professionals, and consumer advocacy groups joining the cause.

The campaign has also expanded to include a broader range of safety topics, such as:

- The risks of choking hazards
- The importance of proper toy storage
- The need for parental supervision during play.

This evolution reflects a comprehensive approach to toy safety, ensuring that children's well-being is prioritized year-round.

Staying aware, advocating, and following these practices, parents, caregivers, and gift-givers can ensure that children enjoy a fun, educational, and injury-free holiday season while supporting the broader mission of Safe Toys and Gifts Month

How to Participate

To ensure safe gift-giving during this month, consider the following guidelines:

- **Check Labels:** Look for age-appropriate labels and follow manufacturer recommendations. Ensure toys meet safety standards such as ASTM certification.
- **Avoid Small Parts:** Steer clear of toys with small or detachable parts for young children to prevent choking hazards.
- **Inspect for Hazards:** Examine toys for sharp edges, loose parts, or other potential dangers.
- **Consider Child's Age and Abilities:** Choose gifts that match the child's developmental stage and interests.
- **Support Educational Toys:** Select toys that encourage learning, creativity, and skill development.
- **Spread Awareness:** Share safety tips and information on social media using hashtags like **#SafeToysAndGiftsMonth** to educate your community
- **Check Recalls:** Research toys online and verify that they have not been recalled for safety issues.