

TOYS FOR EARLY YEARS CHILDREN WITH SEND - SAFETY

Toys are valuable tools for children's development. As well as keeping them entertained, toys help children find out about the world, learn new skills and make friends. But the importance of keeping children safe while they play can't be overstated



The safety laws in Europe are very demanding - all toys sold throughout Europe must comply with the strict safety laws. Toys need to meet British Standards BS 5665 and European Standard EN71. Toys must also conform to the 'Toys Safety Directive' 88/378/EEC and carry a CE mark.

The CE Mark - is required by law on all toys sold within the European Union. It does not indicate quality or safety.



The British Standard BS EN 71, explains how manufacturers should meet the requirements of the Directive, stating how toys should be manufactured and tested and the safety warnings they must carry

Since July 2011, all toys sold in the European Union must comply with the European Toy Safety Directive 2009/48/EC, enacted in the UK as the Toys (Safety) Regulations 2011



The Toys (Safety) Regulations, 2011 require that toys comply with essential safety requirements - children are considered to be vulnerable. A toy is defined as any product or material 'designed or clearly intended for use in play by children under 14 years old'. The users of toys, as well as third parties, must be protected against health hazards and risk of physical injury when toys are used as intended or in a foreseeable way, bearing in mind the normal behaviour of children.

Before toys reach the shelves, they must undergo rigorous testing to ensure they are safe for children to use. Safety testing a teddy bear, for example, might include tugging its eyes, to make sure a young child couldn't easily pull them out and swallow them, and setting it alight, to check whether a child holding a teddy which caught fire, would have time to drop it before being burn



The Home Accident Surveillance System, 1998 report noted - although toys are involved in more than 40,000 accidents each year, their safety is only part of the problem. Many accidents involving toys occur when people trip over them and when babies play with toys intended for older children. Toy accidents most frequently happen to pre-school children, especially those between one and three years of age.

Age warning symbols show that a toy is not safe for children under a certain age, e.g. 0 to 3 years (36 months). This warning is often given because toys contain small parts that could cause a baby or toddler to choke.



The British Toy & Hobby Association represent the interests of British toy manufacturers. Membership of the Association shows a commitment to adhere to the BTHA Code of Practice under the umbrella of the Lion Mark which includes rules covering ethical and safe manufacture of toys, toy safety, a ban on counterfeit goods, an assurance to market responsibly, a commitment to improving sustainability and a desire to promote the value of play through support of the Make Time 2 Play campaign.



https://btha.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/1.ToySafety_7.pdf

The Child Accident Prevention Trust have noted most children's toys are very safe. Accidents involving toys usually happen when a young child plays with a toy that is meant for an older child, or when someone trips over toys that have been left out.

www.capt.org.uk

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, Top 10 toy safety tips:

- 1 Buy toys only from reputable outlets - look for the CE symbol
- 2 Make sure the toy is suitable for the child – check the age range.
- 3 Be particularly careful with toys for children under three.
- 4 Be wary of young children playing with older children's toys.
- 5 Check for loose hair and small parts, sharp edges and points.
- 6 Ensure that garden swings and slides are robust and are not a strangulation hazard.
- 7 Check toys regularly for wear and repair or dispose of them where necessary.
- 8 Keep play areas tidy.
- 9 Follow the instructions and warnings provided with toys.
- 10 Supervise young children at play.



<https://www.rospa.com/home-safety/advice/product/toy-safety/>

The Health, safety and welfare of anyone who uses toys, e.g. employees, parents and children is of prime importance to a setting. The Management of the setting should recognise that achieving and maintaining high standards of safety requires that everyone is aware of their responsibilities.

Children with a physical disability may have reduce gross motor skills requiring adults to support them to access play materials, e.g. moving a wheelchair to the activity table, placing a sand or water tray at an accessible height. Some children who have limited fine motor skills may benefit from using larger equipment, e.g. chunky crayons and paint brushes.



Make Time 2 Play lists the Physical benefits of play: Fitness, Strength, Balance, Dexterity, Co-ordination, Self-confidence, Social skills, Mood, Happiness, Good behaviour, Better brain function, Body image, Confidence, Improved sleeping and eating patterns.

<http://www.maketime2play.co.uk/>