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Report Shows Increase in Toy-related Injuries Treated in U.S. Emergency Rooms

- Prevent Blindness Offers Tips on How to Purchase Safe Toys and Gifts for Kids-

CHICAGO (Nov. 23, 2015) – In 2013, the [U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission \(CPSC\)](#) estimated that hospital emergency rooms across the country treated 265,700 toy-related injuries, compared to 265,000 the year before. And, 73 percent of those injuries were to children under the age of 15. In fact, approximately 83,700 were to those under 5 years of age.

As with previous years, the most commonly injured part of the body is the head and face area, with the most common injuries being lacerations, contusions, or abrasions. The top three specifically identified toys associated with the most estimated injuries for all ages in 2013 were non-motorized scooters, toy balls and toy vehicles.

Prevent Blindness, the nation's oldest non-profit eye health and safety group, is offering tips to buyers to help make sure all gifts are safe, especially those intended for children.

"According to the CPSC, there were 700 more toy-related injuries than the previous year," said Hugh R. Parry, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. "We must be diligent about taking the necessary precautions to avoid these types of accidents and help protect our kids."

Before purchasing a toy or gift, Prevent Blindness suggests:

- Avoid toys that shoot or include parts that fly off.
- Ask yourself or the parent if the toy is right for the child's ability and age. Consider whether other smaller children may be in the home that may have access to the toy.
- Avoid purchasing toys with sharp or rigid points, spikes, rods, or dangerous edges.
- Buy toys that will withstand impact and not break into dangerous shards.

- Look for the letters "ASTM." This designation means the product meets the national safety standards set by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM).
- Gifts of sports equipment should always be accompanied by protective gear (such as a basketball along with eye goggles).
- Don't give toys with small parts to young children. Young kids tend to put things in their mouths, increasing the risk of choking. If any part of a toy can fit in a toilet paper roll, the toy is not appropriate for children under the age of 3.
- Do not purchase toys with long strings or cords, especially for infants and very young children as these can become wrapped around a child's neck.
- Always dispose of uninflated or broken balloons immediately.
- Read all warnings and instructions on the box.
- Always supervise children and demonstrate to them how to use their toys safely.

In addition, stay informed of recalled products. For further information on toy and product recalls, visit the U.S. Product Safety Commission Web site at www.cpsc.gov.

For more information on safe toys and gifts for children, visit preventblindness.org/safe-toy-checklist, or call Prevent Blindness at (800) 331-2020.

About Prevent Blindness

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, Prevent Blindness is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call 1-800-331-2020. Or, visit us on the Web at preventblindness.org or facebook.com/preventblindness.

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