

## Lead in Children's Products:

### Recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatricians Protecting Our Most Vulnerable Consumers

There is no known "safe" level of lead for children. No study has determined a blood lead level that does not impair child cognition. Since any measurable lead level causes lasting harm, prevention of exposure is the only treatment.

Lead exposure is an important, unnecessary, and preventable poisoning.

Damage done by small amounts of lead may be hard to measure and even harder to understand. Most children who accumulate lead in their body do not have any physical symptoms, but low lead levels cause a wide array of negative effects, including cognitive, motor, behavioral, and physical harm.

To protect the health of our nation's children, nonessential uses of lead, particularly in products to which children may be exposed, must be prohibited.

#### **The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends the following:**

\* The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) should require all products intended for use by or in connection with children to contain no more than trace amounts of lead.

\* The Academy recommends defining a "trace" amount of lead as no more than 40 parts per million, which is the upper range of lead in uncontaminated soil.

This standard recognizes that contamination with minute amounts of lead in the environment may occur but can be minimized through good manufacturing practices.

\* "Children's product" should be defined in such a way as to ensure it will cover the wide range of products used by or for children. This standard should cover toys intended for use by or with children under the age of 12 years.

\* The limit on lead content must apply to all components of the item or jewelry or other small parts that could be swallowed, not just the surface covering.

\* Legislation or regulations should limit the overall lead content of an item, rather than only limiting lead content of its components. A single product may contain numerous components that could cumulatively contain a dangerous level of lead.

It is important to note that, while limiting lead is important in guaranteeing the safety of children's products, numerous other aspects of this issue should also be considered. Other children's product safety issues include choking hazards, flammability, dangerous magnets, and safe product design.

For more information, please contact Cindy Pellegrini at the American Academy of Pediatrics at 202/347-8600 or [cpellegrini@aap.org](mailto:cpellegrini@aap.org).

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