



# Stay Safe

## Top Five Toy Safety Tips

By Joan Lawrence

(NAPSA)—Whether your children are enjoying their favorite toys or picking out new ones, these tips can help to make sure they stay safe while they play:

1. **Follow the age guidance and safety information on toy packaging.** The age grading isn't about how smart a child is—it's based on the developmental abilities of children at a given age and the specific features of the toy.

2. **Avoid toys with small parts for kids under 3.** Toys that have small parts



**Kids can enjoy their toys more—and more safely—when adults are there to supervise.**

are fine for older kids but can pose a choking hazard for children under 3. Toys with small parts are labeled 3+ and include a warning label, so keep a careful eye out as you shop.

3. **Shop at a retailer you know and trust.** Store staff at established businesses are knowledgeable about the latest safety information. Exercise caution when buying toys at flea markets, garage sales, secondhand stores and the like as these vendors may not be monitoring for recalled products.

4. **Supervise play.** Always supervise your children during playtime. Read through instructions and demonstrate the correct way to use a new toy. It's the best way to make sure your child understands how to safely enjoy it.

5. **Store toys safely.** Lidded toy storage should be nonlocking and have special safety features such as airholes, spring-loaded hinges, and clearances at the hinges to make sure little fingers won't get caught. Organize and store toys to prevent slips, trips and falls.

For more advice on toy and play safety, visit [www.PlaySafe.org](http://www.PlaySafe.org).

• *Ms. Lawrence, aka the "Toy Safety Mom," is a lifelong child safety advocate with more than 20 years of experience in the toy industry and senior vice president of standards and regulatory affairs at The Toy Association.*