



Rock-a-bye baby: new crib safety standards detailed

PARENTS AND CHILDREN SHOULD SLEEP MORE SOUNDLY as a result of federal standards that will improve the safety of cribs. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has issued five new federal regulations which all crib manufacturers were required to meet by June 28, 2011. Retailers, childcare facilities, hospitals, hotels and other public places must have these new safer, sturdier cribs in place by December 28, 2012, while families who own older cribs have several options for making these cribs safer.

The five new requirements of the CPSC for “a safer generation of cribs” are:

1. Traditional drop-side cribs cannot be made or sold; immobilizers and repair kits are not allowed.
2. Wood slats must be made of stronger woods to prevent breakage.
3. Crib hardware must have anti-loosening devices to keep it from coming loose or falling off.
4. Mattress supports must be more durable.
5. Safety testing must be more rigorous.

Here’s what parents need to know:

New Cribs: All new cribs available for purchase in stores should now be compliant with the new safety measures. To be sure, ask the retailer if the crib meets 16 CFR 1219 or 16 CFR 1220 requirements. Consumers are cautioned about buying used cribs or buying cribs via online auction sites; if these cribs were manufactured prior to June 28, 2011, it is highly unlikely they will meet the new federal requirements.

Recalled Cribs: There are some crib brands and styles which have been recalled, but not because they don’t meet the new CPSC requirements. These cribs have other safety issues that have led to their recall. To see if a specific crib has been recalled, go to www.cpsc.gov/info/cribs/index.html.

Child Care Cribs and Other Places of Public

Accommodation: These facilities have until December 28, 2012, to ensure that their cribs meet the new crib standard requirements. Please note that you cannot tell by looking at a crib if it meets these five safety standards so parents will have to talk with their child care providers and others to be sure they have upgraded all their cribs.



Older Cribs: There is no way to retrofit an older crib to make it compliant with the new federal requirements. If you must use an older crib, the CPSC recommends these safety precautions:

- Check the CPSC’s crib recall list to make sure that your crib has not been recalled.
- Check the crib frequently to make sure all of the hardware is secured tightly and that there are no loose, missing or broken parts.
- If your crib has a drop-side rail, stop using that drop-side function.
- Some manufacturers offer immobilizers that will prevent crib sides from dropping down and creating a dangerous situation. To determine if a specific crib has an immobilizer available, go to www.cpsc.gov/info/cribs/index.html.
- Another option is to use a portable play yard, which is not subject to these new safety requirements.

These new regulations are the first updates to crib standards which had been in place for more than 30 years. Since 2007, the CPSC has recalled 11 million dangerous cribs as it works to protect children and families. ❖

In addition to cribs, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission provides parents with the latest safety alerts on toys, car seats, high chairs, furniture and electronics. For more information, visit www.cpsc.gov.