

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Historical Materials from University of
Nebraska-Lincoln Extension

Extension

1994

G94-1212 Child Care Furnishings Safety Checklist

Shirley Niemeyer

University of Nebraska--Lincoln, sniemeyer2@unl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/extensionhist>



Part of the [Agriculture Commons](#), and the [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#)

Niemeyer, Shirley, "G94-1212 Child Care Furnishings Safety Checklist" (1994). *Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension*. 1326.

<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/extensionhist/1326>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Extension at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.



Child Care Furnishings Safety Checklist

This publication presents information about the appropriate selection and evaluation of children's furniture.

Adapted by Shirley Niemeyer, Extension Specialist, Home Environment

- [Child Care Nursery Equipment Safety Checklist](#)
- [Sources](#)

A child's environment should allow for exploration, experiences, and learning; but it must be safe, too.

Parents and child care providers need to know about potential hazards in a child's environment. Often, these hazards involve misused or poorly designed products.

Table I. The number of children in the United States needing hospital emergency treatment in 1984 because of accidents with furnishings.

Furniture or equipment	Number of children
Walkers or jumpers	15,700
Strollers	11,000
Crib extender rails	4,100
Playpens	3,900
Changing tables	1,500
Gates and barriers	1,200
Carriages	1,100
Mattresses and pads	300

Each year many accidents involve children and nursery furniture and equipment (*Table I*). The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) lists walkers or jumpers as the nursery equipment most often involved in accidents and incidents continue to increase. In 1991, CPSC reported that 27,000

children needed hospital emergency treatment because of accidents with walkers.

The National Safety Council reports that most nursery furnishings accidents occur because of a lack of supervision or product misuse. The council blames unsafe features of older furniture that does not meet the federal safety standards set in 1974, as part of the problem.

Child care nursery equipment safety checklist

Use the following checklist when evaluating potential purchases or existing furnishings for children. This is only a guideline; be sure to consider other safety factors.

Bassinets and cradles

- ☐ Bottom is sturdy with a wide, stable base.
- ☐ Screws and bolts are secure. (Check regularly.)
- ☐ Legs have working locks to prevent accidental folding.
- ☐ Mattress fits snugly, with no gaps, against the sides.

Bunk Beds

- ☐ Mattresses and foundations are sturdy to avoid collapse.
- ☐ Areas that may trap or strangle children (such as between guardrail and mattress or bed and wall) are not present.
- ☐ Children are not in danger of falling from top bunk.

Changing tables

- ☐ Drawers or shelves are accessible without leaving the baby unattended.
- ☐ Safety straps are in good shape and will prevent baby from falling.

Cribs

- ☐ Slats are no more than 2 3/8 inches apart.
- ☐ None of the slats are missing or cracked.
- ☐ Mattress fits snugly. Less than two fingers' width is between edge of mattress and crib side.
- ☐ Mattress support attaches securely to the head and footboards.
- ☐ Corner posts are no higher than 1/16-inch to reduce the possibility of entanglement of clothing or cords around the neck.
- ☐ Drop-side latches hold sides securely in raised position.
- ☐ Infants cannot release the drop-side latches.
- ☐ All screws or bolts that secure crib components are present and tight. (Check regularly.)
- ☐ Crib is not set up near curtains or drapery cords.
- ☐ Only children who are shorter than 35 inches use the crib. (Some children who are less than 35 inches tall may try to climb out of the crib.)
- ☐ Suspended crib gyms or hanging toys that could strangle or choke children are not present.

Gates and enclosures

- ☐ Openings are too small to entrap a child's head. (Do not buy or use accordion-style gates or gates that have an expandable enclosure with large V's along the top edge or internal diamond-shaped

openings.)

___ Pressure bar or other fastener is sturdy enough so children cannot fall or push through gate.

High chairs

___ Waist and crotch straps do not attach to the tray.

___ Tray locks securely.

___ Buckle on waist strap is easy to fasten.

___ Base is wide for stability.

___ Caps or plugs on tubing are secure to prevent children from pulling them off and choking themselves.

___ Locking device is effective to keep the chair from collapsing, if it is the folding type.

___ Chair sits away from table, counter, or other surface so that a child cannot push off of it.

Hook-on chairs

___ Restraint system will secure a child.

___ Clamp locks onto the table for added security.

___ Caps or plugs on tubing are secure to prevent children from pulling them off and choking themselves.

___ Chair is set up where the child cannot push off with feet.

Infant carriers

___ Base is wide and sturdy and does not skid easily.

___ Safety belts are strong and adequate.

___ Support devices on back are secure.

___ Carrier is not used as a car seat.

Playpens

___ Side is never left in the down position on a drop-side mesh playpen or mesh crib. (See product's warning label.)

- Mesh has small weave (less than 1/4-inch openings).
- Mesh does not have tears, holes, or loose threads.
- Mesh attaches securely to top rail and floorplate.
- Top rail cover has no tears or holes.

___ Slats in wooden playpen are no more than 2 3/8 inches apart.

___ Staples are secure and none are missing or loose.

___ Strangulation or choking hazards, such as soft pillows, floppy toys, or loose plastic sheeting are not present.

___ Locking devices are effective to prevent accidental folding.

___ Only a few toys are placed in playpen at a time to keep children from climbing on them and falling out.

Strollers

___ Base is wide to prevent tipping, and it does not tip easily in any seat position.

- ___ Seat belts and crotch strap attach securely to frame.
- ___ Seat belt buckle is easy to fasten and unfasten.
- ___ Brakes lock the wheel(s) securely.
- ___ Basket, if present, is low on the back and located directly over or in front of rear wheels.

Walkers*

- ___ Wheel base is wide for stability.
- ___ Covered coil springs prevent finger pinching.
- ___ Seat attaches securely to frame.
- ___ X-frames are not present to pinch or amputate fingers.
- ___ Limit use to areas without steps or stairs.
- ___ Use with caution and only when an adult is present.

*The CPSC is studying walker safety. Some states are banning the use of walkers in child care facilities.

The safe nursery

To receive safety alerts about furnishings or equipment or to report product hazards, write or call:

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)
Washington, DC 20207
800-638-2772

Sources:

Schilde, B. (1986) *ABC Nursery Equipment Safety*. Louisiana State University
The Safe Nursery: Buyer's Guide. (April, 1985). Washington, DC: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.
Consumer Guide. *Buying Guide*. (1985). Baby Equipment Publications International, Ltd.

File G1212 under: SAFETY

B-6, Home

Paper version issued July 1994; 2,000 printed.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Elbert C. Dickey, Director of Cooperative Extension, University of Nebraska, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension educational programs abide with the non-discrimination policies of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.