

Choose Toys that Combine Safety with Enjoyment

A knife is a wonderful instrument, a jump rope provides a pleasant pastime; but both can be dangerous if their use is abused.

The rewards, as well as the dangers, of these two objects are readily apparent, but there are many useful products and pleasant playthings on the market today with hidden dangers.

It is these pitfalls that Congress, acknowledging an increased interest on the part of consumers, has set out to eliminate through legislation.

Industries, however, to which "consumerism" is not a new word, have long been interested in safety. Whether it's the tire industry or the toy industry, reputable companies are aware that safety is synonymous with durability, that durability is synonymous with quality and that quality is a key to whether a product will continue to be acceptable by the consumer in an everchanging marketplace.

Fisher-Price Toys, Inc., world's largest producer of preschool toys in East Aurora, N.Y. for example, has been concerned with safety — child safety — since the company was formed in 1930.

"There is more to making a toy than conceiving an object that will give a child pleasure and a rewarding experience, making it and then marketing it," says Robert Hicks, Vice President of Research and Development. "The safety of the child who will play with it must

also be given top consideration."

The firm employs 18 toymakers full-time whose emphasis insures the safety of each of the 26 million units it produces annually.

"The first thing we do is to examine the concept of the toy and determine what age group this toy is really designed for," said Mr. Hicks. "Then, we start to think about what the child will do or mis-do with the toy."

Wooden or plastic balls on the end of a pull toy string tend to increase the possibility that the line might entangle the child. So,

where possible, Fisher-Price toys are designed without the ball. For a child just learning basic motor skills, however, the ball makes gripping an easier task. Therefore, on a toy such as a musical mobile to be suspended above an infants crib, the firm insures its safety by making the string retract immediately after it is pulled to start the music.

Not only is every toy designed for safety, each is built with the safest materials. All are examined for sharpness, every exposed surface is tested for toxicity, flam-

mability and durability and hidden parts are checked with the idea that they conceivably may be exposed.

Wheels and other parts, if easily gripped, must withstand 45 pounds of pull without breaking. Pull toys with movable parts must undergo 12 miles of motion on a simulator

as well as a drop from 2½ feet, comparable to a child's throwing the plaything from a table.

Once these toys are judged ready for the consumer, they are packaged, jogged to simulate 1,000

miles of travel to the retailer, and then tested again.

"We can't entirely remove the danger from children during their most vulnerable age, but as an industry, we must provide the safest toy we can, within the limits of normal use," said Henry H. Coords, Fisher-Price President.



— Look for sharp, unprotected edges on metal and plastic toys; on wooden toys, check for sharp



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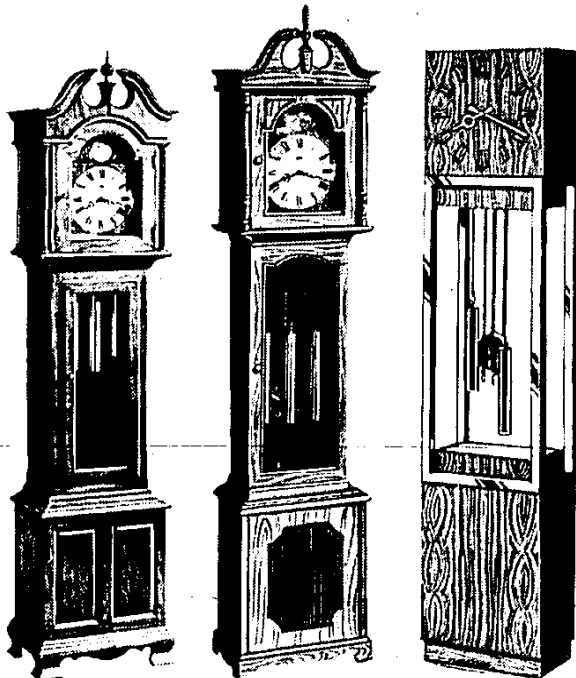
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