Child Accident Prevention Foundation of Australia
Western Australia

Media Release: Toy Safety
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A great gift is a safe gift

As families prepare for Halloween, Christmas, and New Year celebrations, Kidsafe WA encourages parents and carers to put toy safety at the top of their holiday shopping list.

Toys play an important role in supporting children's learning, development, and imaginative play. However, toys that are not suitable for a child's age or stage of development can pose serious safety risks such as choking, suffocation, internal injuries from ingesting small parts, fractures, poisoning and burns.

As many families buy gifts in the lead-up to the festive season, Kidsafe WA urges parents and carers to take a few simple steps when buying gifts to help keep children safe.

Findings from Kidsafe WA's *Injuries from Toys and Play Equipment Bulletin* indicate that 1,493 children presented to the Perth Children's Hospital Emergency Department for a toy/play equipment-related injury between July 2019 and June 2024. Younger children were at greater risk of injury, with 0-4 year olds accounting for a large proportion (61.8%, n=922) and falls being the most common cause of injury (39.7%, n=254). Most injuries occurred in and around the home and farm environment, underscoring the importance of safe play spaces and age-appropriate products.

Scott Phillips, Kidsafe WA CEO, emphasised that choosing a gift appropriate for your child's age and size can significantly reduce the impact of toy-related injuries.

"The excitement of receiving a new toy can quickly turn into a trip to the emergency department if the product is not appropriate for a child's age or contains hidden safety hazards," said a Kidsafe WA spokesperson.

"Taking a few moments to check labels, inspect the product's design and look for potential hazards can help prevent serious injuries and give families peace of mind during the festive season."

Kidsafe WA recommends parents and carers follow these five steps when choosing safer toys:

- **Follow the age recommendation** – Choose toys that are appropriate for a child's age and developmental stage. Toys that are marked as unsuitable for children under 3 years may have small parts which could be a choking hazard to small children.

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- **Read the label and instructions** – Check that the toy is non-toxic, non-flammable and has the distributor's contact details.
- **Consider the design of the toy** – Avoid toys that have explosive or projectile parts and toys with long strings or ribbons – these should be less than 22cm in length.
- **Inspect the quality of the toy** – Toys that are poorly constructed can break easily with normal play and can pose a choking hazard to small children.
- **Avoid toys with batteries and magnets** – These toys can be dangerous if swallowed and can cause serious injuries with potentially lifelong consequences.

For more information about Kidsafe WA's Safe Gift Giving resources, please visit:

- www.kidsafewa.com.au/SafeGifts/
- https://www.productsafety.gov.au/about-us/product-safety-news/news/be-summer-safe
- Facebook - @kidsafewa
- Instagram - @kidsafewa

- **ENDS** -

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