



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Put Toy Safety at the Top of Your List This Christmas

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### Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

There is nothing like seeing the joy in a child's eyes when he or she opens up gifts on Christmas morning. However, as a parent it is just as important to know that the gifts your children get for Christmas are as safe as they are fun.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), an estimated 240,000 children end up in the emergency room each year because of an accident involving a toy or gift. In addition, the CPSC also reports that between the years of 2014 and 2016 35 children

died because of injuries involving a toy or other gift.

These statistics are heartbreaking, however, there are steps we can take to ensure Christmas is safe, and filled with nothing but special moments. To protect your children from injury this holiday season, follow the below tips:

- Make sure the gifts and toys are appropriate for the child's age. You should also read through the directions together to be sure that he or she knows how to play with the items;
- Stay away from toys a child could choke on, like balloons and small parts that can be swallowed. In addition, throw away packaging and wrappers to avoid choking hazards;
- When giving a child a toy such as a bike or scooter, consider adding a helmet and other age appropriate safety equipment as well;
- Avoid gifts and toys with strings or cords, which can be dangerous to younger children;
- Never give strong magnets to children who can be seriously injured by them; and

- Examine toys for sharp edges or corners before giving them to young children.

For more information on toys that can be especially dangerous to young children, as well as other steps you can take to stay safe this holiday season, visit <https://child-familyservices.org/december-is-national-safe-toys-and-gifts-month/>