

# Don't gamble with your child's safety



## Second-hand can cost lives

Having a new baby can be expensive and whilst new parents can save money by purchasing some second-hand goods or using hand-downs from family and friends, there are some products which we recommend you always purchase new if possible. Even if you know the history of a product (ie, passed down from an older sibling) safety features and mechanisms can deteriorate with wear-and-tear and could cause serious injury or even death.

### 'Why shouldn't I buy second-hand?'



#### CAR SEATS & CHILD RESTRAINTS

- Damage to the seat may not be visible and could cause the product to fail in the event of an accident.
- Interior foam may have deteriorated and no longer provide adequate protection.
- Buckles could be worn and damaged and may fail in the event of an accident, causing the child to be thrown from the seat.
- Harnesses and stitching may be damaged or have deteriorated causing them to fail in the event of an accident.
- Instructions may be missing for correct fitting.
- The seat may not be suitable for your vehicle and may not fit correctly.
- The seat may not comply with the latest safety standards (either R44.03 or R129 i-Size)



#### PRAMS, PUSHCHAIRS & BUGGIES

- Stiffness when folded could indicate a distorted frame.
- Locking devices may be faulty resulting in equipment folding and injuring the child. Also, new products have two separate locking devices to stop equipment accidentally folding.
  - Brakes become less effective and may not meet current safety standards.
  - Check that they conform to BS 7409:1996 and/or BS EN 1888



#### STAIR GATES & BARRIERS

- It is essential that this fits securely into the opening of your doorway or staircase. If it doesn't it will offer your child no protection whatsoever.
- You may not get a copy of the instructions - these are essential for the correct fitting of the item.
- If a second-hand product does not come with all of its fittings, it is likely that you will be unable to fit the product correctly in the first place.
- Check that the item conforms to legal safety standard BS EN 1930.

# Second-hand baby products sold through local advertising, car boot sales and internet auction sites have been found to be dangerous!



## COTS

- Manufacturers ensure that all new products are supplied with the correct fittings so that they can be assembled correctly. If a second-hand cot has damaged or missing components, cracked or split wood, it could become insecure and dangerous.
- New products are made of the finest quality materials, with paint free from harmful chemicals. If the cot has been repainted, it could contain lead or other substances that may be harmful to your baby.
- Second-hand cots may have wider spacing between the bars, posing a real threat of entrapment or strangulation.
- Check that your cot conforms to the legal safety standard - BS EN 716.



## MATTRESSES

- For reasons of hygiene, it is always wise to buy a new mattress for each baby. Recent research suggests that there is a link between Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS or 'cot death') and secondhand mattresses. An old mattress might contain mould, bacteria and dust mites, which could be linked to SIDS.
- If a second-hand mattress is too small it could result in your child being suffocated in the gap between the mattress and the cot which should be no more than 4cm (1.5 inches).
- Check that the mattress conforms to the legal safety standard - BS 1877.

## HIGHCHAIRS

- It is vital that a highchair is stable, has a fully functioning harness system and undamaged tray.
- If legs or feet are damaged then the highchair can topple over.
- If there are fittings missing or damage on either the highchair or harness then serious injury can occur.
- New highchairs have additional safety features that minimize the hazards of entrapment or strangulation in the folding mechanism or cross members. These are unlikely to be present in second-hand highchairs.
- Second-hand highchairs and trays are likely to harbour bacteria from previous use. New highchairs are made from the finest non-toxic, easy to clean materials.
  - Ensure that your highchair conforms to the legal safety standard BS EN 14988.



## At a glance - what to look out for:

**INSTRUCTIONS** - are they missing? Instruction leaflets contain vital information about the product's use or maintenance. Without them you could place your child in danger.

**SAFETY STANDARDS** - The product may not comply with the appropriate British or European Safety Standard. Many second-hand goods will not meet any standard, never mind the latest one!

**DAMAGE** - Some products wear out surprisingly quickly when used frequently. It's not easy to see if a part has worn beyond its safe limits or is in imminent danger of failing altogether. You will have no way of knowing if the product has been abused in the past.

This leaflet is produced by the Baby Products Association as part of its consumer awareness programme. It is free to download and distribute.

For more information call:  
0845 456 9570 or  
email: [info@b-p-a.org](mailto:info@b-p-a.org)