

## **NSC – Crib Safety Tips**

**National Safety Council (630) 285-1121 - <http://www.nsc.org/library/facts/cribtips.htm>**

### **Crib Design**

Dispose of antique cribs with decorative cutouts, corner posts or lead paint.

The space between the slats should be no more than 2-3/8 inches apart to prevent infants from getting their head stuck between them. Cribs manufactured after 1974 must meet this and other strict safety standards.

The corner posts should be the same height as the end panels or less than 1/16 of an inch higher than the end panels.

No cut-out areas on the headboard or footboard so a baby's head cannot get trapped.

The top rails of crib sides, in their raised position, should be at least 26 inches above the top of the mattress support at its lowest position.

As soon as the child can pull himself to a standing position, set and keep the mattress at its lowest position. Stop using the crib once the height of the top rails is less than three-fourths of the child's height.

### **Mattress**

The mattress should fit snugly next to the crib so that there is no gap. If two adult fingers can be placed between the mattress and the crib, the mattress should be immediately replaced.

Do not use plastic packaging materials, such as dry cleaning bags, as mattress covers. Plastic film can cling to children's faces and should never be in or near the crib.

Put your baby to sleep on his or her back or side in a crib with a firm, flat mattress and no soft bedding underneath. Talk to your pediatrician about which sleeping position is best for you child.

### **Crib Hardware**

The drop side(s) of the crib should require two distinct actions or a minimum force of ten pounds with one action to release the latch or the locks to prevent accidental release by the child.

The crib hardware should be checked for disengaged, broken, bent or loose pieces. Special checks should be made of the mattress support hangers and brackets so they cannot drop. The hardware and the crib should be smooth and free of sharp edges, points and rough surfaces.

## **Crib Accessories**

Bumper pads should cover the entire inside perimeter of the crib and tie or snap in place. Bumper pads should have at least six straps or ties and any excess length of straps or ties should be cut off. Bumper pads should never be used in lieu of proper spacing between the slats and should be removed from the crib as soon as the child can pull himself to a standing position.

Teething rails that are damaged should be fixed, replaced or removed immediately.

To prevent possible entanglement, mobiles and crib gyms, which are meant to be hung over or across the crib, should be removed when the child is five months old or when he begins to push up onto hands and knees or can pull himself up.

Keep the crib clear of plastic sheets, pillows, and large stuffed animals or toys. These can be suffocation hazards or can enable youngsters to climb out of the crib.

Any cloth or vinyl items that are loose or torn should be replaced or repaired immediately.

## **Crib Environment**

Do not place crib next to a window. Drapery and blind cords pose an entanglement hazard and window screens are not intended to keep a child in, only insects out.

Install smoke detectors. Follow the manufacturer's directions for placement. Check at least once a month to make sure battery and smoke detector are in good working condition.

Lead is a health hazard, especially to young children. It can be found in dust and soil off busy roadways, in old paint on walls, toys and furniture and sometimes in paint on new imported items. If you think your child has taken in leaded paint or soil, or you need help with identifying or removing lead paint, call the EPA's National Lead Information Center at 800-424-5323.