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W.A.T.C.H.'S 2014 Summer Safety Report For Parents and Caregivers

"10 SUMMER SAFETY TRAPS"

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(Boston, MA- June 5, 2014) World Against Toys Causing Harm, Inc. (W.A.T.C.H.) today cited "10 Summer Safety Traps" as examples of hazards that parents and caregivers need to know to safeguard children this summer season.


At a press conference at Franciscan Children's Hospital in Boston, Consumer Advocates Joan E. Siff, President of W.A.T.C.H., and James A. Swartz, a nationally known trial attorney and Director of W.A.T.C.H., highlighted "10 top" safety concerns, including recreational products sold in stores, water-related activities and lesser-known "hidden" hazards to help prevent tragic accidents this season.


In addressing the potential hidden hazards found in many summertime activities, Siff and Swartz said the combination of warm weather and school vacation is an opportunity for children to enjoy outdoor weather, but can also be a time for injuries.

Summer months account for nearly half of all injury-related deaths to children. Hospital emergency departments will treat about 2.7 million children injured in accidents this summer. These incidences of preventable injuries to children can be significantly reduced with education. For instance, raising awareness about the potential hazards of wearing a helmet on the playground or leaving a baby pool unattended could save lives. Certain activities, such as using backyard trampolines, should be avoided altogether. Also, recent recalls are a reminder that not all toys are safe. In the last 12 months alone, there have been 21 toy recalls, representing about 1,451,578 units of toys available for sale in the US and Canada.


“10 TOP SUMMER SAFETY TRAPS”


(EXAMPLES OF SOME OF THE MANY HAZARDS TO WATCH OUT FOR
AND WHAT TO DO TO SO CHILDREN CAN HAVE A SAFER SUMMER...)

TRAP: #1	INFLATABLE BOUNCE HOUSES
	
HAZARD:	<i>Potential for impact injury!</i>
W.A.T.C.H. OUT!	These colorful inflatable houses are often staples at backyard birthday parties during the summer months. However, the inherent potential danger of a “toy” that invites children to jump and bounce in close proximity to each other is not worth the risk. In addition, there have been numerous reported incidences of these bounce houses becoming unmoored and falling over or being blown away by gusts of wind leading to further potential for serious injuries. Recently, a five and six year old were playing inside a bounce house that was blown 15 to 20 feet into the air. One boy sustained head injuries that required a medically-induced coma.
FACTS:	Inflatable amusements for children, such as bounce houses, have led to injuries and deaths. Inflatable amusements are responsible for approximately 31,069 injuries in a five-year period—91% of these injuries involved moon bounces (aka bounce houses). In this same 5-year period, there were 4 deaths from inflatable amusements.
TO DO:	<i>Avoid inflatable bounce houses!</i>


TRAP: #2	BACKYARD TRAMPOLINES
	
HAZARD:	<i>Potential for fractures, cervical spine injuries, and paralysis!</i>
W.A.T.C.H. OUT!	Although popular among children and adolescents, backyard trampolines have been associated with potentially catastrophic injuries. Netting, padding and adult supervision have not prevented the numerous injuries relating to trampoline use and may provide a false sense of security. Trampolines are not toys and should not be used at homes.
FACTS:	There were an estimated 79,475 trampoline-related injuries in 2013 and 22 trampoline-related deaths between 2000 and 2009. Most injuries from trampolines occur at private homes. The American Academy of Pediatrics has warned against the use of home trampolines due to the potential for permanent and devastating consequences.


TO DO:	<i>Do not use backyard trampolines!</i>
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TRAP: #3	<u>IMPROPERLY USED OR DESIGNED BABY GATES</u>
	
HAZARD:	<i>Potential for falls, traumatic brain injuries!</i>
W.A.T.C.H. OUT!	Baby gates have been associated with fall and impact injuries due to improper use, installation and design defects resulting in approximately 5 injured children per day (avg. 1794 injuries per year). Since 1990, gate related injuries have more than tripled. Pressure mounted baby gates in particular should never be used at the top of steps. Additionally, during the summer season, when baby pools and other bodies of water may present drowning hazards outside children's homes, parents are reminded that pressure mounted gates are not reliable barriers between children and water. In-home baby gates are not designed with the same safety features used for pool fences and gates. When it comes to water safety, multiple barriers of protection must be used to protect children, including automatic locking gates specifically designed for use around pools, fences, pool covers, and alarms, to name a few.
FACTS:	<p>Baby Gates and Barriers: In 2012, there were an estimated 2,900 baby gate and barrier related injuries to children under 5 treated in U.S. emergency rooms. From 2008 to 2010, there were 4 reported deaths to children under 5 years old associated with baby gates and barriers. Self-installed baby gates have fallen down and otherwise been bypassed by young children; they are not a substitute for proper barriers of protection between children and backyard swimming areas.</p> <p>Pool and Spa Annual Statistics (non-baby gate related): The importance of multiple layers of effective barriers between children and pools is highlighted by the number of pool and spa-related submersion incidences: Each year, approximately 390 children under 15 years old drown in pools and spas and about 4,900 children under 15 years old are seen in emergency rooms for submersion related injuries.</p>
TO DO:	<i>Beware of the proper use and placement of baby gates!</i>


TRAP: #4	<u>FLOTATION DEVICES: WATER WINGS, INFLATABLE RINGS, RAFTS</u>
	
HAZARD:	<i>Potential for Drowning!</i>
W.A.T.C.H. OUT!	Flotation devices, such as water wings and inflatable rings, can provide a false sense of security that a child is safe in the water. Additionally, larger flotation devices, such as rafts, can block the view of a child in trouble. Flotation devices are not safety devices and do not replace the need for adult supervision.
FACTS:	Drowning is the leading cause of accidental death between the ages of 1 and 4. Every day, 9 people drown (1 out of every 4 deaths is to a child under 14 years old).
TO DO:	<i>Diligent supervision is required around water whether or not a child is using</i>


	<i>inflatable pool toys!</i>
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TRAP: #5	AIRBORNE TOYS (i.e. toy helicopters, boomerangs)
	
HAZARD:	<i>Potential for laceration, impact and eye injuries!</i>
W.A.T.C.H. OUT!	Children of all ages are attracted to toys that fly or soar, but may be unaware of their hidden dangers. When these toys come into contact with a child's head or face, serious injury can occur.
FACTS:	Sharp edges and rigid parts on airborne toys, such as toy helicopters and boomerangs, have the potential to cause eye, blunt trauma and other injuries upon impact.
TO DO:	<i>Avoid airborne toys that could lead to eye and other injuries!</i>

TRAP: #6	BABY POOLS
	
HAZARD:	<i>Potential for drowning!</i>
W.A.T.C.H. OUT!	Baby pools are portable and convenient to assemble, yet the potential for serious injury is easily overlooked. Baby pools are often left filled with water with no barriers to prevent access. Water in backyard baby or wading pools, as well as in other containers such as buckets and fountains, while inviting to children, can potentially and tragically lead to drowning.
FACTS:	Young children can drown in as little as 2 inches of water. The non-pool/ non-spa injury statistics, typically involving smaller bodies of water such as buckets and fountains, emphasize the seriousness of the risk that even shallow water poses to children: 434 children under 5 (2006-2010) died and 233 children under 5 (2006-2010) were injured from non-pool and non-spa related submersions. 92% of these injuries and deaths occurred at home.
TO DO:	<i>Never leave baby pools filled with water unattended in your backyard. Always empty baby pools, buckets, and other containers after each use, and turn them upside down so they cannot collect rain water!</i>

TRAP: #7	TOYS WITH SMALL PARTS
	
HAZARD:	<i>Potential for ingestion and choking injuries!</i>
W.A.T.C.H. OUT!	This summer, continue to watch out for toys that are choking hazards for young children. Although this hazard is a year-round concern, toys with small parts have earned a place as a summer safety trap due to the continuing volume of recalls and injuries to children from dangerous toys with small parts. Easily detachable small parts, long slender parts that could be mouthed, and soft materials that could occlude a child's airway have no place in toy boxes.
FACTS:	In the last 12 months, there have been 14 toy recalls (394,254 units in Canada and U.S.) for choking and ingestion hazards.
TO DO:	<i>Be familiar with the types of choking and ingestion hazards associated with toy injuries and deaths in the past! Check toys for long slender parts, pieces that could easily break off, and soft materials that could be ingested and block a young child's airway!</i>

TRAP: #8	TRICYCLES
	
HAZARD:	<i>Potential for fall and head injuries!</i>
W.A.T.C.H. OUT!	Tricycles have been associated with drowning and head injuries. Children have died when falling from their tricycles into pools. Pool patios are an inviting surface for wheeled activities. Children may be drawn near a pool to play; make sure your pool has multiple barriers of protection to prevent access and guard against accidental drowning. Additionally, as with other wheeled activities, a child should wear a helmet when using a tricycle.
FACTS:	There were 7 deaths from 2011 to 2012 when children fell from their tricycles. In 2012, 4 children died when they fell from their tricycle into a pool and drowned.
TO DO:	<i>Children should wear helmets, stay far away from water, and always be supervised when riding tricycles!</i>

TRAP: #9	NON-MOTORIZED SCOOTERS
	
HAZARD:	<i>Potential for impact injuries, traumatic brain injuries, death!</i>
W.A.T.C.H. OUT!	Non-motorized scooters are responsible for the most toy-related injuries. As with other toys with wheels, never let children ride non-motorized scooters near traffic and always use appropriate safety gear, such as helmets and other protective padding.
FACTS:	An estimated 60,100 injuries associated with non-motorized scooters are treated in hospital emergency rooms each year (52,400 of these injuries are to children under 15 years old). In a recent three-year period, there were 5 reported deaths involving non-motorized scooters and motor vehicles.
TO DO:	<i>Never let children use non-motorized scooters, or other riding toys, near traffic or without the proper safety gear!</i>

TRAP: #10	DRAWSTRINGS & BICYCLE HELMETS on PLAYGROUNDS
	
HAZARD:	<i>Potential for Strangulation!</i>
W.A.T.C.H. OUT!	Drawstrings, typically on the neck or waist of children's clothing, can catch on slides and other playground equipment leading to death or near strangulation. Similarly, straps from bicycle helmets worn on playgrounds can get caught on equipment leading to entanglement and other serious consequences. In addition to playground injuries, straps and chords on children's garments have caught on bus doors, cars and other objects posing strangulation, asphyxiation and dragging hazards.
FACTS:	<p><u>Drawstrings:</u> There have been 26 reports (as of 2011 to the CPSC) of children who died when drawstrings from their clothing became entangled on playground slides, school bus doors, or other objects.</p> <p><u>Helmets:</u> The CPSC has reported deaths when straps from children's helmets snag on playground equipment or other objects, such as trees, and lead to asphyxiation.</p> <p><u>Playgrounds:</u> There were at least 40 deaths associated with playground equipment between 2001 and 2008; the average victim was 6 years olds. Out of the 27 fatalities that were from strangulation or asphyxiation, 20 deaths involved a second product such as a drawstring, leash or jump rope, 12 deaths were associated with slides, and 9 deaths were on swings.</p> <p><u>Recalls:</u> Many children's clothes with drawstrings have been recalled due to the risk of strangulation; however, clothes with similar hazards can still be found in stores. A few weeks ago (4/8/2014) a company paid \$600,000 in civil penalty for failing to report selling 2,100 children's garments made with drawstrings.</p>
TO DO:	<i>Remove drawstrings from children's clothing! Remove bicycle helmets while on playground equipment!</i>

Any reference to, or photographic representation of, specific products herein neither constitutes nor implies a recommendation or a criticism of such products, but rather is used only as a visual example of the types of potential hazards discussed.

SOURCES: CPSC, NATIONAL HELMET SAFETY INSTITUTE, NEISS, ACADEMIC PEDIATRIC JOURNAL

***FACTS:** INJURIES AND DEATH STATISTICS IN THE U.S.A. UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED. INJURIES- REFER TO INJURIES TREATED IN U.S. HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOMS

W.A.T.C.H., Inc. is a non-profit organization working to educate the public about child safety. W.A.T.C.H helps raise awareness about the dangers lurking in many toys, children's products, and recreational activities. Noted trial attorneys, authors and consumer advocates, Edward Swartz (1934-2010), James Swartz, Joan Siff and W.A.T.C.H. have been responsible for the "10 WORST TOYS" nominees released for over 30 years as well as a **Summer Safety Report** addressing summer hazards for children. For more information on W.A.T.C.H. and the press conference, please visit www.toysafety.org.

James A. Swartz, Director of W.A.T.C.H., noted trial attorney, author and consumer advocate.

Joan E. Siff, President of W.A.T.C.H.

Franciscan Hospital for Children, located in the Brighton neighborhood of Boston, is the largest pediatric rehabilitation facility in New England. Programs and services offered address the medical, behavioral and educational needs of children. For more information on Franciscan Hospital for Children please visit www.franciscanhospital.org. Become a fan on Facebook at www.facebook.com/FranciscanHFC or follow Franciscan Hospital for Children on Twitter at www.twitter.com/FranciscanHFC