

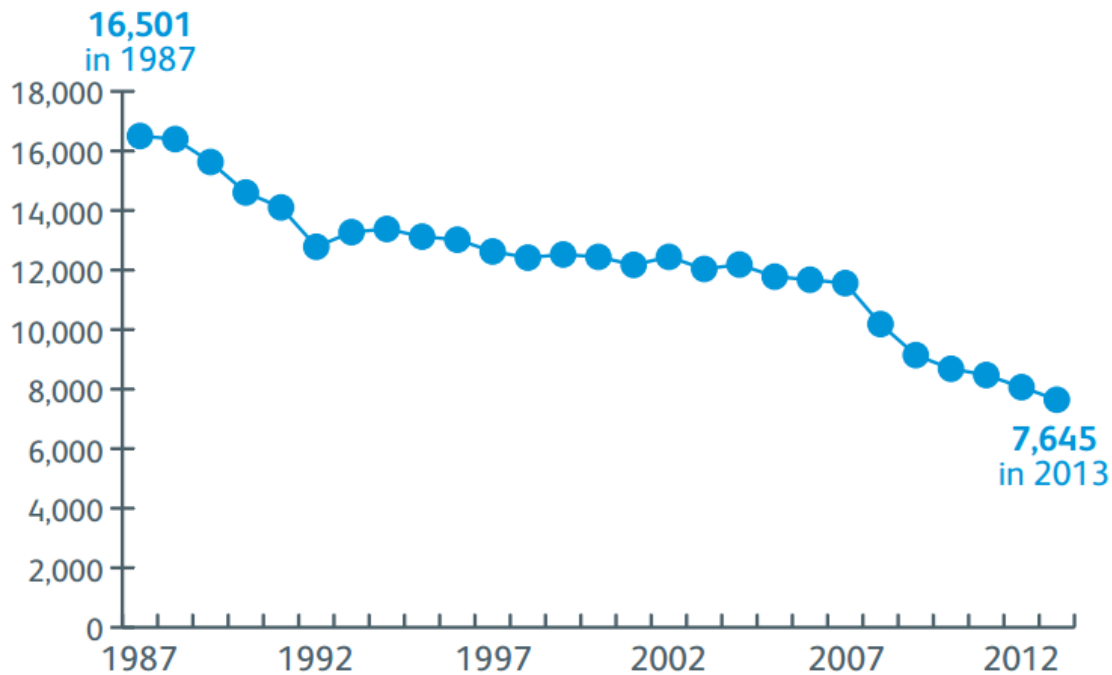
On February 26, 2015, Safe Kids released a report on home safety, "[Report to the Nation: Protecting Children in Your Home](#)." It was made possible by funding from Nationwide. This is a more in-depth public policy analysis.

Public Policy for Home Safety

Making our kids safer in the home involves a partnership of families, the private sector, the healthcare community and public safety educators like Safe Kids. It also includes a role for governments at the federal, state and local levels. Smart public policy has made homes safer, and it can help lead to greater progress. There has been a dramatic decline in childhood injury deaths across all risk areas, from 23.29 deaths per 100,000 population (16,501 kids) in 1987 to 9.3 deaths per 100,000 population (7,645 kids) in 2013 (see chart below).

Along the downward slope of this steady decrease in fatalities, we can plot laws passed, rules and standards set, corporate reforms implemented and education/awareness campaigns mounted, all of which have contributed to the positive direction.

Number of unintentional injury deaths among children 19 and under, 1987-2013, across all risk areas



Product Safety in the Home. A good example of the role of government in creating safer homes is protecting kids from dangerous or defective products. The Consumer Product Safety Commission was established in 1971,¹ and was strengthened significantly with passage of the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008.² The CPSIA, which expanded the agency's mission and power, highlighted the important role of protecting children. The agency does its job with modest resources. In FY 2015, Congress provided a budget of \$123 million. In his budget, the President requested \$129 million.³

Recalls. The United States has developed the gold standard for warning consumers about defective products that should be taken out of the market, which is conducted primarily by the CPSC.⁴ The process works well because, in most cases, recalls are made through a consensus reached by the government agencies and the private sector. On occasion, Congress will instruct government agencies to set mandatory guidelines for certain products such as flammability standards for children's pajamas, requiring poison prevention labeling on products and tougher consumer warnings on toys that a child can choke on. Sometimes, however, agencies must use the enforcement powers given to them by Congress.

The increased vigilance by the CPSC and industry has been effective. In recent years, the number of toys recalled has declined significantly. In 2014, toy recalls totaled 30, compared to 172 in 2008.

Tiny Magnet “Toys” Removed from Marketplace

Very few cases become a confrontation between government and the private sector. But, one such case recently occurred involving the removal from the marketplace of tiny, powerful magnets packaged together as stress relievers for adults. But the product—most of them marketed under the name “Buckyballs”—caused stress in the healthcare system. When swallowed by a child, the magnets would join together and cause serious trauma to a child’s young intestinal tract. The manufacturer refused to withdraw the products and the Consumer Product Safety Commission brought a lawsuit.¹⁶ In the end, the CPSC was successful in removing Buckyballs from the marketplace.

CPSC is also responsible for protecting kids from home-based dangers, including:

- Carbon monoxide poisoning;⁵
 - TV, appliance and furniture tip-overs;
 - Unsafe sleep environments;
 - Window falls and window blind cord strangulation
 - Drowning, based on the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool & Spa Safety Act.⁶ Safe Kids worked with Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-Fla.) to pass the law.
 - Products that pose a fire, electrical, chemical or mechanical hazard.
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Kid Lobbyists

Another policy player in the home safety partnership is kids. They can tell stories that provide awareness and influence public policy in a profound way. In Minnesota, 11-year-old Charlene Mechley died of CO poisoning in her home. Her classmates at Hermantown Middle School near Duluth responded to the tragedy with a campaign they called “Hopes of Faith,” which is providing CO detectors to homes in their community that need them. “I want to try to stop and help prevent it from happening again, even if I do just save one life, it's for the better,” said Bryanna Kliegle, one of the girls who started the campaign. The other members of Hopes of Faith are Ani Jovanovich and Alexa Aagenes. Safe Kids partnered with its partner Kidde to provide 100 CO detectors to Hopes of Faith.¹⁷

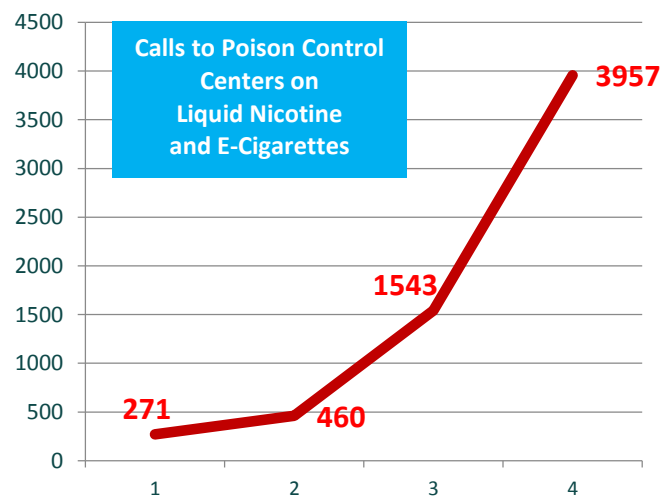
Public Policy Prescriptions

Increased Awareness About Recalls. The CPSC and other federal consumer safety agencies have done a good job of identifying products that pose a risk and negotiating voluntary recalls. However, recall notifications do not get the wide distribution they deserve. The public safety community must work with agencies and the private sector to amplify news about important recalls, which might be achieved through a creative public-private partnership.

Seeking Sustainable Funding for Poison Control: One of the best examples of a public-private partnership which helps save young lives is the network of 55 poison control centers around the country. The network is a mix of independent non-profits, extensions of a regional health care system or part of a public health department. They are funded by a variety of sources, public and private, and the return on investment is high—including \$1.8 billion in costs saved each year because people were able to avoid going to hospitals.⁷ However, federal support is meager.⁸ Congress has authorized modest yearly federal funding of \$28.6 million, but appropriations have been reduced to \$18.8 million. Safe Kids continues to inform Congress on the return on investment of this critical program and advocates for an annual appropriation of the full \$28.6 million.

Today, the need is especially acute. There are risks emerging for child safety that are now reaching the professionals at poison control centers, including laundry detergent packets; legal, stronger and more available forms of marijuana; and liquid nicotine refills. According to the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, calls to poison control centers involving e-cigarettes and liquid nicotine increased from 271 in 2011 to 3,957 in 2014.⁹

Liquid nicotine, sold in small vials, is especially dangerous. They can pack the nicotine of 140 cigarettes.¹⁰ If swallowed by a child, they can be lethal. A typical vial holds around 100mg/ml of the substance -- a conservative estimate of a lethal dose in children is 10mg.¹¹ Congress, the Food and Drug Commission and state legislatures are racing to regulate this powerful substance.



Source: Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids

Understanding Sudden Unexpected Infant Death: Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) is an umbrella term to describe infant deaths resulting from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), accidental suffocation and strangulation in bed, and other ill-defined/unspecified causes of death for infants under 1 year of age. SIDS is the fourth-leading cause of infant mortality in the United States.¹² The American Academy of Pediatrics' position statement on recommendations to reduce SIDS and SUID deaths emphasizes the importance of safe sleeping environments, such as room-sharing instead of bed-sharing; using a firm sleep surface; and keeping soft objects like pillows, blankets and toys out of the infant's sleeping environment. Because evidence is the foundation for smart policy solutions, we need a national surveillance system to help us understand why these unexplained deaths occur at a rate of about 2,000



per year. Further, a uniform model for death investigations must be established to support the surveillance system.¹³

Providing Resources for Fire and CO Poisoning: Safe Kids supports state and local governments that have passed legislation to increase alerts for fire and carbon monoxide dangers, including laws requiring detectors with 10-year power capacity.¹⁴ We have supported federal, state and local legislation to provide more community resources for CO awareness, including legislation offered by Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.). It is important for Congress to pass it.⁸

Conclusion: Of course the most effective actors in efforts to make our homes safer are parents and caregivers, and public policy has played and can continue to play an effective role in making homes safer.

RISK	REMEDY	ACTION
<p>Drowning</p> <p>Drowning is leading cause of injury-related death for kids ages 1 to 4. In 2013, 249 kids 5 and under drowned.</p>	<p>2007 federal law aims to make pool and spas safer with drain standards and a national drowning prevention education program.</p>	<p>Your community may apply for funds from the CPSC to educate the public on drowning and enforce the law.</p>
<p>Poisoning</p> <p>Poison centers answer more than 1 million calls a year about children 5 and under who have been exposed to medicines, cleaning and other dangerous products.</p>	<p>Centers don't get federal funds they need to do their job. They are authorized to receive \$28.6 but Congress has been cutting that almost in half.</p>	<p>Program the poison center number in your phone: (800) 222-1212. Safe Kids advocates in favor of poison center funding.</p>
<p>Toy Safety</p> <p>In 2013, CPSC reported nine toy-related deaths among children, and another 178,100 who went to ERs for toy-related injuries.¹⁵</p>	<p>A 2008 federal law increased CPSC's powers, emphasizing child safety. It stepped up seizures of dangerous goods at U.S. ports: 12M in 2013 and 91.6% were toys.</p>	<p>Sign up for Safe Kids' children's product recall alerts. Check recalls before major purchases of products for your kids.</p>
<p>Window Falls</p> <p>At least 3,300 children 5 and under are injured each year falling out of windows; an average eight children die each year.</p>	<p>In 2007, Minnesota's "Laela's Law" required buildings to install window fall prevention devices. Named after 2-year-old Laela, who survived a window fall.</p>	<p>Safe Kids can help you work with our coalitions to pass a Laela's Law in your city or state. Get started now by contacting us.</p>
<p>Smoke and Carbon Monoxide</p> <p>In the United States, 277 people died of fire or burn related deaths in residential home fires in 2011. CO poisoning is a special risk to kids, pregnant women, and the elderly.</p>	<p>Safe Kids supports successful efforts to pass laws requiring long-life smoke alarms with non-removable batteries, and laws to require home CO detectors.</p>	<p>Check your state's fire safety laws and see if your home or building meets the safety standards.</p>
<p>Safe Sleep</p> <p>In 2013, 819 infants under the age of 1 suffocated or strangulated in bed.</p>	<p>Need national surveillance system on sudden unexpected deaths so we can understand why so many infants are dying.</p>	<p>Congress passed a law to create a pathway for a surveillance system but must finish the job.</p>



References

- ¹ Consumer Product Safety Act," 15 U.S.C. §§ 2051–2089, 1972. Available at <http://www.cpsc.gov/PageFiles/105435/cpsa.pdf>. Accessed February 6, 2015.
- ² The beginning sections of the bill all focus on child safety. Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008," H.R. 4040, 2008, Available at <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/110/hr4040/text> Accessed February 6, 2015.
- ³ "Fiscal Year 2016 Performance Budget Request," Consumer Product Safety Commission, February 2, 2015. Available at <http://www.cpsc.gov/Global/About-CPSC/Budget-and-Performance/FY2016BudgettoCongress.pdf>. Accessed February 13, 2015
- ⁴ Food safety recalls are conducted by the Food and Drug Administration and the Food Safety Inspection Service, while car seats are within the jurisdiction of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.
- ⁵ Primarily, the CPSC's role is an educational one. Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), supported by Safe Kids and other groups, has sought a federal bill to provide communities with more resources to prevent CO poisoning which passed out of the Senate Commerce Committee but did not advance to a floor vote. S.1794, Nicholas and Zachary Burt Memorial Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Prevention Act. Available at <https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/senate-bill/1793?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22Nicholas+and+Zachary+Burt+Memorial+Carbon+Monoxide+Poisoning+Prevention+Act%22%5D%7D>. Accessed February 9, 2015. State legislatures and municipalities have also passed laws requiring homes, schools and other places where children are located to have carbon monoxide detectors present.
- ⁶ Safe Kids worked with Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-Fla.) to successfully pass the Graeme Baker law, and recently the Congresswoman worked again to make the community education aspect of the law effective. H.R. 1721, H. Rpt. 110-365, 2007, Available at: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/110th-congress/house-bill/1721?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22Virginia+Graeme+Baker+Pool+and+Spa%22%5D%7D>. Accessed February 9, 2015.
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- ⁸ This downward trend began in 2011 when Congress cut funding by about 25 percent and then at the end of 2011 by another 14 percent. The American Association of Poison Control Centers reported on the implication of diminished public investment. For example, Louisiana closed its center in 1998. The next year there were 15,000 more emergency room visits for poisoning that cost an additional \$1.4 million. "Poison Centers in Danger," AAPCC. Available <http://production-aapcc.dotcloud.com/about/poison-centers-danger/>. Accessed February 9, 2015.
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- ¹⁰ "Child resistant packaging of electronic cigarette devices and refill liquid containers containing nicotine," Center for Tobacco Control Research & Education, June 27, 2014. Available <https://tobacco.ucsf.edu/child-resistant-packaging-electronic-cigarette-devices-and-refill-liquid-containers-containing-nicot>. Accessed February 9, 2015.
- ¹¹ Velez, L, Schwartz, E, Ordonez, J, "Toxic Liquid Nicotine and the Dangers of E-Cigarettes," *Emergency Physicians Monthly*, June 30, 2014. Available <http://www.epmonthly.com/departments/subspecialties/toxicology/toxic-liquid-nicotine-and-the-dangers-of-e-cigarettes/>. Accessed February 9, 2015.
- ¹² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS). National Center for Injury Prevention and Control Website. Unintentional injury, fatal and nonfatal, children ages 19 and under, 1987-2013. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/index.html>. Accessed February 2, 2015.
- ¹³ Working with a strong coalition, Safe Kids supported Congressman Frank Pallone (D-NJ), and Senators Kelly Ayotte (R-ME) and Sherrod Brown (D-OH) on passage of a bill that created a pathway towards surveillance and model practices when an infant dies because unexplained reasons. Sudden Unexpected Death Data Enhancement and Awareness Act, P.L. 113.236. Available <https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house-bill/669/text?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22Sudden+Unexplained+Infant%22%5D%7D>. Accessed February 9, 2015.
- ¹⁴ We conduct this work on fire and CO, which is made possible with the support of Kidde.
- ¹⁵ The CPSC's "Toy-related" category is a broad one including when a toy may have been incidental to a child's injuries such as tripping on a toy or falling from a non-motorized vehicle. For example, in the 2013 CPSC report about toys, 52,500 involved falls related to non-motorized scooters and other riding toys. "Toy-Related Deaths and Injuries, Calendar Year 2013," CPSC, Available <http://www.cpsc.gov/Global/Research-and-Statistics/Injury-Statistics/Toys/ToyReport2013.pdf> Accessed February 22, 2015.
- ¹⁶ "Buckyballs and Buckycubes High-Powered Magnet Sets Recalled Due to Ingestion Hazard; Craig Zucker To Fund A Recall Trust, Settles With CPSC," Consumer Product Safety Commission, May 12, 2014, Available <http://www.cpsc.gov/en/Newsroom/News-Releases/2014/Buckyballs-and-Buckycubes-High-Powered-Magnet-Sets-Recalled/> Accessed February 26, 2015
- ¹⁷ Neuville, A, "Remembering the Loss of Charlene Mechley: Safe Kids Joins "Hopes of Faith" Effort," Fox 21 Available <http://www.fox21online.com/news/local-news/Remembering-the-Loss-of-Charlene-Mechley/31183006> Accessed February 26, 2015

