

## Tips for Choosing & Using Children's Products

- ✓ **Eliminate unnecessary products and toys.** Only buy products that you and the baby need! Donate unused and gently used products or swap with other parents.
- ✓ **Prioritize high exposure and frequently used products for replacement.** Replace toys that are used daily or mouthed by your baby. Replace personal care products used daily, like soap, and those that are not washed off, like lotion, before other products used less frequently or that are washed off the body.
- ✓ **Use products in a safe way to reduce or eliminate exposure to chemicals of concern.** Replace toys, bottles, and other products when they wear out.
- ✓ **Choose plastics carefully.** Avoid polycarbonate (#7) and polyvinyl chloride (#3) when possible. Choose bottles made of glass or BPA free plastic.
- ✓ **Choose unscented products.** Scented cleaners and body care products can contain chemicals that may affect your hormones.
- ✓ **Choose teethingers** made from safer plastics, organic fabric, or uncoated wood instead of vinyl.
- ✓ **Choose bibs** made of fabric or are labeled "vinyl free" or "PVC free."
- ✓ **Avoid brominated and chlorinated flame retardants.** Choose tight fitting cotton pajamas for children older than 9 months. Check with the manufacturer of car seats, nursing pillows, strollers, and other foam products for their use of flame retardants.
- ✓ **Understand that plywood and particleboard toys and furniture** may contain formaldehyde, which can irritate the eyes, nose, and throat and is a carcinogen.
- ✓ **Choose safer personal care products.** Choose products without harsh chemicals, like sulfates, phthalates, and parabens. Avoid products with "fragrance" listed as an ingredient.
- ✓ **Avoid nail polish while pregnant and around infants and children.** Nail polish typically contains harmful ingredients that we breathe in and enter our body through our fingernails. Use safer nail polish that's labeled "three free" and does not contain dibutyl phthalate, toluene, and formaldehyde.
- ✓ **Buy products from companies you trust.** Do your homework and learn what ingredients brands use or avoid in their products.
- ✓ **Subscribe to the Consumer Product Safety Commission's recall notices.** Receive notification via email when children's toys and products are recalled. For more information and to sign up, visit <https://www.cpsc.gov/cpsclist.aspx>.

### Use online tools to help you shop smarter.

Tools, like those below, provide product health and safety information to help you select better products.

#### HealthStuff.org

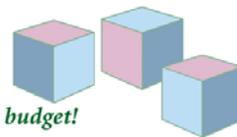
<http://www.healthystuff.org>  
Testing results for toys, children's products, cars, apparel and accessories, home improvement. Also identifies chemicals of concern that have been found in products.

#### SkinDeep

<http://www.ewg.org/skindeep>  
Rates personal care products and their ingredients based on the health impacts of the ingredients. Has information for adults, pregnant women, babies, and children.

#### GoodGuide

<http://www.goodguide.com>  
Rating system that looks at health impacts of products based on their ingredients and a company's social and environmental practices. Includes food, toys, personal care and household products.



## Tips to help you choose a crib mattress

- ✓ **Choose** mattresses certified by a third party, such as GreenGuard, GOTS, Oeko-Tex, or USDA Organic [see sidebar]
- ✓ **Choose** a mattress free of potentially harmful chemicals, such as vinyl, phthalates, heavy metals, antimicrobial protection, bromine, polybrominated diphenyl ether (PBDE)
- ✓ **Choose** natural or less hazardous materials, such as cotton, rubber latex, plant based foam, polyester batting, wool
- ✓ **Choose** a food grade polypropylene or polyethylene cover
- ✓ **If vinyl covers can't be avoided**, wrap the mattress with a separate polypropylene or polyethylene cover to avoid contact with vinyl and prevent chemicals from offgassing
- ✓ **When using vinyl covered mattresses**, take the new mattress out of the packaging and put it in your garage or unoccupied room for at least a week. This allows a large portion of the volatile chemicals to be released from the mattress before the baby sleeps on it.
- ✓ **Choose** wool as it is naturally flame retardant. Some mattresses are wrapped in wool & need a separate cover to be waterproof.
- ✓ **Choose** baking soda & hydrated silica flame retardants rather than chemical flame retardants

**Questions to ask when shopping for foam products**, such as changing table pads, portable crib mattresses, nursing pillows, gliders and rockers with cushions, toys, etc.

- What is the foam made of? Polyester batting is preferable.
- What is the cover material? Is the cover treated with antimicrobial protection?
- Is the product waterproof? What is the proper way to clean it?
- Is it flame resistant? Are chemical flame retardants used?

### Preferable Third Party Certifications



#### GreenGuard

Focus: indoor air quality  
Mattresses must meet limits for VOCs, formaldehyde, aldehydes, phthalates, and particulates to be certified



#### Oeko-Tex

Focus: safer materials  
Limits/forbids heavy metals, phthalates, perfluorinated compounds, pesticides, formaldehyde, toxic flame retardants, and others from mattress components



#### GOTS (Global Organic Textile Standard)

Focus: organic materials  
Mattresses must contain at least 95% organic fibers

#### USDA Organic

Focus: organic materials  
Components and/or mattresses must contain 95% organic content

