



CPB CONSUMER ADVISORY ON DROP-SIDE CRIBS

32 Fatalities in Last 9 Years

Drop-side cribs are one of the most popular crib designs because of the convenience of having one side that can be lowered to allow easy access to the baby. However, in recent years, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has announced 12 recalls involving more than 9.2 million drop-side cribs due to suffocation and strangulation hazards. The CPSC is aware of 32 infant and toddler deaths and hundreds of incidents as a result of drop-side detachments in cribs made by various manufacturers. The New York State Consumer Protection Board (CPB), as a State safety designee, is issuing this special consumer advisory to alert parents and caregivers to this potential hazard.

Nature of Problem

Drop-side hardware is prone to break or deform during normal use, which can allow the drop side to detach in one or more corners from the crib. If an infant or toddler moves into the space created by a partially detached drop side, the child can become entrapped or wedged between the mattress and the railing and suffocate. Infants can also strangle in the “V” shape formed by a drop side that detaches in an upper corner.

Several manufacturers have stopped selling drop-side cribs or will do so shortly. However, many older drop-side cribs are still in use, and some may even be sold at second-hand stores, yard sales and other sites. Older cribs subjected to wear and tear are more vulnerable to mechanical failure.

Safety Measures

Tips for parents and caregivers:

- Check www.recalls.gov to make sure your drop-side crib has not been recalled. Some of the cribs that have been recalled can be repaired with an “immobilization” device that locks the drop side in place and prevents it from detaching. These devices will be provided free of charge to owners of many drop-side cribs. Check the specific crib recall notice for instructions on receiving this device. Immobilization devices are not a solution for cribs with broken or damaged hardware.
- Make sure that the hardware is tight to keep the crib sturdy and that the drop side operates smoothly.
- Check all sides and corners of the crib for disengagement.
- Take note that the older the crib, the more likely screws will loosen and fall out and plastic parts will break. Wood warps and shrinks over time and glue can become brittle.
- Do not attempt to repair the crib yourself if any parts are broken, as babies have died in cribs where repairs were attempted by caregivers.
- Repeated assembly and disassembly increases the likelihood that crib parts can be damaged or lost.

For more information on crib safety, visit www.nysconsumer.gov and the CPSC’s [“Safe Sleep Initiative” website](#).