



## **December is Safe Toys and Gifts Month Make Sure Your Holiday Purchases Bring Nothing but Happiness**

In the excitement of gift-giving this year, keep in mind that toy safety is key. Prevent Blindness America, a volunteer eye-health and -safety organization, reports that thousands of youngsters ages 14 and under suffer serious eye injuries — including blindness — each year from toy-related incidents.

As you're buying gifts for the youngsters in your family this season, follow these Prevent Blindness America guidelines to ensure a safe, happy holiday for everyone.

### **Before You Purchase a Toy:**

- Read all warnings and instructions on the box. Ask yourself if the toy is right for your child's ability and age.
- Avoid toys with sharp or rigid points, spikes, rods or dangerous edges.
- Buy toys that will withstand impact and not break into dangerous shards.
- Look for the letters ASTM. This means the product meets the national safety standards set by the American Society for Testing and Materials.
- Avoid toys that shoot or include parts that fly off. Remember, BB guns are not toys.

### **Before Your Child Plays with a Toy:**

- Inspect the toys for safe, sturdy construction.
- Explain how to use the toy.
- Fix or throw away any toy with broken components.

### **Always:**

- Keep young children away from toys meant for older children.
- Supervise your children while they play and complete craft projects (scissors and glue can be very dangerous to a child's eyesight).
- Have children wear the right eye protection (face shields, helmets, eyeguards) for sports.

See this and other articles and information in DFMC's December 2009 Drug Free Family News, go to [www.drugfreemarioncounty.org](http://www.drugfreemarioncounty.org) and click the appropriate link on the home page.

Drug Free Marion County, a not-for-profit organization, promotes, implements and coordinates community efforts to prevent and reduce the abuse of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs among youth and adults.