

# Consumer Product Safety Alert

FROM THE U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

## CPSC Warns Parents About Child Accidents in Recliner Chairs

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is concerned about possible accidental death or injury to young children using or playing on recliner chairs. Since January 1980, the CPSC has received reports of 8 deaths and several serious brain injuries to children involving recliner chairs.

Information available to the CPSC about the accidents shows the victims:

- were between the ages of 12 months and 5 years;
- were usually unsupervised at the time of the accident;
- were apparently climbing or playing on the leg rest of the chair while the chair was in a reclined position;

and

- were trapped when their heads entered the opening between the chair seat and the leg rest as their own body weight forced the leg rest down.

After receiving this information from CPSC, the recliner chair industry established voluntary guidelines that called for improvements in new recliner chairs. These guidelines specify: 1) that a device(s) will be installed that will reduce the opening created between the leg rest and seat cushion when the chair is in the reclined position; and 2) that the following caution be attached to all recliner chairs:

### CAUTION

DO NOT ALLOW CHILDREN TO PLAY ON THIS MECHANIZED FURNITURE OR OPERATE THE MECHANISM. LEG REST FOLDS DOWN ON CLOSING SO THAT A CHILD COULD POSSIBLY BE INJURED. ALWAYS LEAVE IN AN UPRIGHT AND CLOSED POSITION. KEEP HANDS AND FEET CLEAR OF MECHANISM. ONLY THE OCCUPANT SHOULD OPERATE IT.

Consumers who have the older design of recliner chairs in their homes are urged to use appropriate precautions in preventing young children from playing on these chairs. Consumers who are shopping for new recliner chairs should look for chairs that meet the voluntary industry guidelines.