

# CPSC Fails to Ban Crib Bumpers Dangerous to Infants

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Washington, DC---Pediatricians and consumer advocates are disappointed that the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has failed to ban the sale of padded crib bumpers. While the groups recognize the agency's [Nov. 3 statement](#) as a welcomed step forward in warning parents of the hazards posed by these unnecessary products, CPSC's failure to ban padded crib bumpers counters overwhelming evidence that they contribute to infant deaths.

The CPSC statement says, "We strongly warn parents and caregivers not to use padded crib bumpers. . . We strongly believe that the risk of death from padded crib bumpers far outweighs any purported benefits. When it comes to any child's safe sleep environment, bare really is best." Yet, the agency did not call for a ban of the products, and instead placed the responsibility on the parent or caregiver rather than the manufacturer. Despite sufficient evidence to ban them from the marketplace now, the agency has put off action for several years. The CPSC has indicated that it will begin developing a performance standard for crib bumpers in 2018, an unnecessary delay.

The American Academy of Pediatrics' (AAP) Oct. 24 [policy statement](#), SIDS and Other Sleep-Related Infant Deaths: Updated 2016 Recommendations for a Safe Infant Sleep Environment, reaffirms that crib bumpers contribute to an unsafe sleep environment for infants and should be banned. Among the policy statement's [recommendations](#):

- To reduce the risk of SIDS, infants should be placed for sleep on their back, for every sleep, until the child is 1 year old.
- Infants should sleep in a crib or bassinet with a firm mattress covered by a fitted sheet with no other bedding or soft objects.
- Because there is no evidence that bumper pads or similar products that attach to crib slats or sides prevent injury in young infants, and because there is the potential for suffocation, entrapment and strangulation, these products are not recommended.
- Babies should only be brought into the parents' bed for feeding or comfort.
- Babies should never be placed on a sofa, couch, or cushioned chair, either alone or sleeping with another person.

Crib bumpers are decorative only; they do not serve any safety purpose whatsoever. In fact, the science is clear that crib bumpers pose a serious suffocation hazard to children, and that evidence has grown since CPSC first began reviewing this issue in 2012. However, in September 2016, CPSC staff released an analysis of child deaths associated with crib bumpers that was scientifically questionable and inappropriately came to the conclusion that CPSC should not take any action on these products. Multiple safe sleep experts reviewed that [evidence](#) and found the analysis and conclusion flawed, including Rachel Moon, MD, FAAP, lead author of AAP's safe sleep policy statement.

"Urging parents not to purchase crib bumpers while allowing them to remain on the market is confusing, and inappropriately places the burden of safety on parents while needlessly exposing infants to risk of death," said AAP President Benard Dreyer, MD, FAAP. "Parents tell us that 'if they sell them, they must be safe.' Pediatricians and child health advocates will continue to call on the CPSC to protect infants by banning these dangerous products that serve no child health benefit."

"The statement released is a step forward, but in the real world, doesn't change much," said Nancy Cowles, Executive Director, Kids in Danger. "Expectant or new parents shopping online or in stores will have no knowledge of this statement – only what they see in front of them on store shelves."

"Now the CPSC stands with the CDC, medical experts, and safety advocates in clearly articulating the dangers of this unnecessary product. However, we need strong action to accompany these strong words," stated Rachel Weintraub, Legislative Director and General Counsel, Consumer Federation of America.

"Regulators are right to say that padded bumpers come with a clear risk of injury or death, and have no place in a baby's crib," said William Wallace, policy analyst for Consumers Union, the policy and mobilization arm of Consumer Reports. "But what kind of message does it send to consumers when these dangerous products are still on store shelves? It's time for them to go."

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*The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 66,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults. ([www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org))*