Four More Deaths Linked to Infant Sleepers Like the Fisher-Price Rock ‘n Play Sleeper

The Kids II products should be recalled, Consumer Reports says

By Rachel Rabkin Peachman
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MORE ON CHILD SAFETY
Fisher-Price Rock ‘n Play Sleeper Should Be Recalled, Consumer Reports Says
What Parents Need to Know About the Fisher-Price Rock ‘n Play and Safe Sleep

Update: On May 15, Health Canada announced two separate recalls for Fisher-Price Rock ‘n Play Sleepers sold in Canada, citing safety risks. The first involved approximately 2,000 products sold from December 2009 to February 2011 with model number R6070. The second involved about 600 sleepers, of various models, that were sold on Amazon.ca (Amazon’s Canadian website) between January 2018 and April 2019. Health Canada said caregivers should immediately stop using the products for naptime or overnight sleep. The recall does not apply to Fisher-Price Rock ‘n Play Soothing Seats, which are nearly identical products but not marketed for sleep.

Update: On April 26, Kids II recalled 694,000 of its Rocking Sleepers citing infant deaths, and said parents should immediately stop using the products.

Update: On April 12, Fisher-Price recalled all 4.7 million of its Rock ‘n Play Sleepers, citing infant fatalities, and said parents should immediately stop using the products.

This article was originally published on April 11.

Four additional deaths are linked to infant inclined sleepers, according to Consumer Reports’ ongoing investigation of these kinds of products.

The sleepers—the Ingenuity Moonlight Rocking Sleeper and the Bright Starts Playtime to Bedtime Sleeper—are made by the children’s product company Kids II. A spokesperson for Kids II confirmed to CR that the company is aware of four deaths associated with those products. The Bright Starts product was discontinued in 2016, but the Ingenuity Moonlight Rocking Sleeper is still available.

On April 8, CR tied a similar product, the Fisher-Price Rock ‘n Play Sleeper, to 32 deaths and called for that product’s immediate recall. CR also urged the Consumer Product Safety Commission to set strong rules for all infant sleep products and give consumers more protective, timely, and consistent safe sleep advice.

“These inclined products are linked to infant deaths and conflict with medical experts’ safe sleep recommendations. Kids II should recall them immediately,” says William Wallace, senior policy analyst at CR. “Babies should be put to bed alone, on their backs, on a flat, firm surface in their own space. If any infant sleep product doesn’t align with this advice, the CPSC should get it off the market right away, so that parents and caregivers don’t unwittingly put their babies at risk.”

After CR's initial report on the Rock 'n Play Sleeper, the American Academy of Pediatrics urged the CPSC to recall that product immediately. The group also said it "does not recommend inclined sleep products like the Rock 'n Play, or any other products for sleep that require restraining a baby."

A spokesperson for Kids II said, “Each of these [deaths] are tragic and heartbreaking. In the four cases, there were either extenuating circumstances not relating to the sleep product or a failure to follow instructions and warnings. No incidents were a result of product malfunction or design.”

When CR asked Fisher-Price for further comment, a spokesperson restated: “We have worked and will continue to work closely with the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) regarding the safe use of our products, including the Rock 'n Play Sleeper.”

A spokesperson for the CPSC said the agency is investigating the risks of inclined sleepers, but would not comment specifically about these four additional deaths. “Incidents involving fatalities warrant the highest level of attention at CPSC,” the spokesperson said.

The agency has not yet issued a recall for the Fisher-Price or Kids II products, and noted that “In order to bring a case, we need to establish the facts and evidence to make a defect determination to meet the legal standard required for a recall.”

But Marietta Robinson, who served as one of several CPSC commissioners from July 2013 to June 2018, says the agency has known of the risk of these types of products for years and could have taken action sooner. “These deaths were occurring over many months at the end of my time there, and I pushed for answers and appropriate action,” Robinson says. But Robinson says she was told that the agency “could not determine if the deaths resulted from a defect, which I believe to be nonsense.”

Nancy Cowles, executive director of Kids in Danger, a nonprofit that focuses on reducing childhood injuries from consumer products, advises parents who currently have a Rock 'n Play Sleeper or any other inclined sleep product to stop using it immediately. “Do not sell or donate it. Destroy it or store it until there is a recall so you can participate and get a refund if offered,” she says.

Read more about what parents can do to calm infants and help them sleep.
Consumer Reports: New Recall of Dangerous Infant Sleepers is Important, But Process Flawed

April 26, 2019

Kids II rocking sleeper recall follows CR investigation tying products to infant deaths

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission today announced that the children's product company Kids II is recalling almost 700,000 rocking sleepers that are available for sale or are in people's homes. The sleepers are marketed using several brand names, such as the Ingenuity Moonlight Rocking Sleeper and the Bright Starts Playtime to Bedtime Sleeper.

CR reported in an April 11 story that four deaths were linked to these Kids II infant rocking sleepers, and today the CPSC identified an additional infant death that occurred in one of these products. This story followed the CR investigation published on April 8 about the Fisher-Price Rock 'n Play Sleeper, which found that the product was tied to at least 32 infant deaths. CR called for the recall of both companies' products. Fisher-Price announced a recall on April 12.

Marta Tellado, President and CEO of Consumer Reports, said “How many times will we see government and industry move too slow to prevent unnecessary tragedy? When products are linked to deaths, it is inexcusable to not inform the public immediately. The CPSC should do their job and be far more vigilant, so no one – especially those who are the most vulnerable – are ever put in harm's way.”

Kid II’s Bright Starts product was discontinued in 2016, but the Ingenuity Moonlight Rocking Sleeper has been available for purchase recently.

William Wallace, Manager of Home and Products Policy for Consumer Reports, said, “Kids II misled parents by marketing these products as safe for sleep. Kids II—like Fisher-Price—owes its customers full refunds regardless of how long ago they bought a product.

“This recall is important, but the way it’s happening reveals a pattern. As with Fisher-Price, this recall happened only after the public learned of infant deaths, it is being announced on a Friday when it could be missed by consumers, and its terms make it harder for consumers to send the product back and get compensated.

“The top priority for any safety recall should be saving lives, not company costs. It should be as easy as possible for all affected consumers to participate quickly. In light of the Fisher-Price and Kids II recalls, where the companies seem to be setting their own timing and terms, we question whether the CPSC is doing all it can to stand up for consumers’ interests.”

Consumer Reports urges anyone with a Kids II rocking sleeper or Fisher-Price Rock ‘n Play to immediately stop using the product. American Academy of Pediatrics safe sleep recommendations say that babies should be placed alone to bed on a firm, flat surface in their own space, with no extra bedding. All infant inclined sleep products conflict with that advice.

Contact: David Butler, dbutler@consumer.org, 202-462-6262

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