



Recommendation of the Council
concerning Safety Measures Taken
in the Interest of Children

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Date(s)

Adopted on 30/11/1983

Background Information

The Recommendation concerning Safety Measures Taken in the Interest of Children was adopted by the OECD Council on 30 November 1983 by the Committee on Consumer Policy (CCP). The Recommendation calls for special attention to the safety of children given the high incidence of accidents in all Member countries, and that a great number of these accidents are preventable. The Recommendation lists actions to be taken targeted to children product safety, including product safety requirements and standards (notably for goods intended for children). It also calls Adherents to establish national statistics systems under the OECD 1997 Recommendation concerning the Establishment of Data Collection Systems Related to Injuries Involving Consumer Products, labelling, publicity and education for accident prevention purposes, and review of effectiveness at national and international levels with notification via the CCP.

THE COUNCIL,

HAVING REGARD to Article 5 b) of the Convention on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development of 14 December 1960;

HAVING REGARD to the Recommendation of the Council of 18 December 1979 concerning the Safety of Consumer Products [C(79)202(Final)];

HAVING REGARD to the Report by the Committee on Consumer Policy of 15 December 1982 on Safety Measures taken in the Interest of Children [CCP(83)2];

CONSIDERING that the incidence of accidents, both fatal and non-fatal, involving children is high in all Member countries, that such accidents including road accidents are the highest single cause of death between the ages of 1 and 15, that they cause an immense amount of human suffering in addition to placing a considerable burden on the medical and hospital resources of Member countries, and that a great number of accidents to children are preventable;

CONSIDERING that the promotion of a co-ordinated and systematic approach towards product related and other safety measures is a general objective recognised in all Member countries;

On the proposal of the Committee on Consumer Policy;

RECOMMENDS that Governments of Member countries should give special attention to the safety of children by taking action in the following areas:

I. Product Safety Requirements and Standards

1. Member governments should take all necessary action to ensure that goods intended for children and other goods which could present a hazard to them are not unsafe or liable to become unsafe through any defect in design, construction or composition, both under circumstances of normal use and expected misuse; in addition, appropriate steps should be taken to ensure that safety equipment intended for use by children is adequate for its intended purpose and does not itself present hazards of any kind for the user.

2. With this objective in mind, Member governments should bring about compliance with relevant national or international standards either through the voluntary co-operation of the manufacturers and importers concerned or by means of statutes or regulations as appropriate.

3. Member governments should endeavour to ensure that safety standards are revised without delay if data relating to child accidents reveals that they are not sufficiently stringent or comprehensive.

4. Member governments which have not already done so should consider the introduction of child resistant packaging for products, especially medicinal products, which are dangerous if ingested by children.

II. Data Collection and Research on Accidents

1. Member countries which have not already done so should consider establishing a system of data collection related to injuries involving consumer products as suggested in Council Recommendation C(77)139(Final) so as to enable them to identify and analyse accidents involving children.

2. Member countries should ensure that information obtained from data collection systems and all other sources which may reveal useful facts about the safety of products used by or for children or other matters which relates to the health or safety of children is carefully studied in order to serve as a basis for action where appropriate.

III. Labelling, Publicity and Education

1. Member governments should ensure that where necessary, consumer goods which may present a hazard to children, bear or are accompanied by adequate warnings and information which are reasonably conspicuous, easily legible and capable of being readily understood in order to ensure their safe use both when properly used for their intended purpose and also when subjected to normal expected misuse by children.

2. When contemplating the adoption of safety symbols, Member governments should prefer existing international symbols where they are considered to be appropriate and effective, in the interests of harmonization and avoidance of barriers to trade; they should undertake publicity efforts to ensure that the public is aware of warning symbols on consumer products.

3. Member governments should ensure that there is adequate and continuing publicity and education on child accident prevention.

4. Member governments should encourage safety-teaching in schools.

IV. Review of Effectiveness at National and International Level

1. Member governments should review, as appropriate, the existing arrangements, especially within the governmental field, including resource allocation, relating to the prevention of accidents to children, and should consider whether any changes are necessary in order to improve the effectiveness of measures to prevent accidents to children.

2. Member governments should ensure that new safety regulations and product bans and also, as far as they become known to the authorities, recalls and research projects concerning the safety of children are communicated to other Member countries in the framework of the informal notification procedure operated by the Committee on Consumer Policy.

3. The Committee on Consumer Policy should review the implementation of this Recommendation and report to the Council as appropriate.

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