



HSHS St. Elizabeth's Hospital Reminds Parents and Loved Ones To Keep Safety In Mind When Shopping For Children's Gifts

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O'FALLON — When shopping for holiday gifts this Black Friday, remember to prioritize safety. While it may be exciting and enticing to purchase a new toy for loved ones, it is important to remember to check the safety and age-range of the toy.

“When purchasing toys for children, it is important to recognize the recommended age range of a specific toy,” said Dr. Saba Bajwa, HSHS Medical Group pediatrician. “The age range is there for a reason: some toys may be too complicated for younger children or contain small parts that could cause choking accidents. This is especially important for younger children because they are more likely to put objects in their mouths,” she said. “For older children, it is helpful if they understand how to play with a toy safely so they do not get hurt or injure others.”

HSHS St. Elizabeth’s Hospital and HSHS Medical Group encourage parents and loved ones to follow these tips from [healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org) on how to buy safe toys:

1. **Read the label.** Warning labels give important information about how to use a toy and what ages the toy is safe for.
2. **Think LARGE.** Make sure all toys and parts are larger than the child’s mouth to prevent choking.
3. **Avoid toys that shoot objects into the air.** They can cause serious eye injuries or choking.
4. **Avoid toys that are loud** to prevent damage to child’s hearing.
5. **Look for stuffed toys that are well made.** Make sure all the seams and edges are secured. It should also be machine washable.

6. **Buy plastic toys that are sturdy.** Toys made from thin plastic may break easily into sharp pieces.
7. **Avoid toys with toxic materials that could cause poisoning.** Make sure the label says “nontoxic.”
8. **Avoid hobby kits and chemistry sets for any child younger than 12 years.** They can cause fires or explosions and may contain dangerous chemicals. Make sure the older child knows how to safely handle these kinds of toys.
9. **Electronic toys should be “UL Approved.”** This indicates the toy meets industry safety standards. Check the label to be sure.
10. **Look out for toys with small batteries or loose magnets.** If they get loose, younger children might be tempted to put them in their mouths, noses or ears, which can cause serious injuries.

To learn more about toy safety, visit <https://www.cpsc.gov/safety-education/safety-guides/toys#resources>.

For more information about HSHS St. Elizabeth’s Hospital, visit steliz.org.

About Hospital Sisters Health System

Hospital Sisters Health System’s (HSHS) mission is to reveal and embody Christ’s healing love for all people through our high-quality Franciscan health care ministry. HSHS provides state-of-the-art health care to our patients and is dedicated to serving all people, especially the most vulnerable, at each of our physician practices and 15 local hospitals in two states – Illinois (Breese, Decatur, Effingham, Greenville, Highland, Litchfield, O’Fallon, Shelbyville and Springfield) and Wisconsin (Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire, Oconto Falls, Sheboygan and two in Green Bay). HSHS is sponsored by Hospital Sisters Ministries, and Hospital Sisters of St. Francis is the founding institute. For more information about HSHS, visit www.hshs.org. For more information about Hospital Sisters of St. Francis, visit www.hospitalsisters.org.