



Safe Kids Worldwide
Comment to the Consumer Product Safety Commission
Federal Register Notice Docket No. CPSC-2017-0044
Safety Standard Mandating ASTM F2057-17 for Clothing Storage Units
April 3, 2018

Re: Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act-F2057-17, Proposed Rule on Mandatory Standard Against Clothing Storage Unit Tipovers

Introduction:

Safe Kids Worldwide and twenty Safe Kids coalitions around the country write to urge the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to promulgate a final rule for a mandatory standard for design and construction of clothing storage units (CSUs). We believe a mandatory standard is appropriate and will reduce the numbers of injuries and tragic deaths associated with CSU tipovers. Unstable chests, dressers and bureaus endanger the smallest children in U.S. homes. We need stronger CSU safety standards in place to protect them and prevent future tragedies.

Safe Kids' Understands the Curious Nature of Children

For more than 30 years, Safe Kids Worldwide has advocated to prevent childhood unintentional injury related to dangers in the home such as drowning, falls, and furniture and television tipovers. We all know children are natural explorers. They are innately curious; their home is their playground. They reach, they climb, they pull and push. They do not know climbing on drawers or grabbing something from the top of a dresser may lead to a misadventure at best and at worst a tragedy.

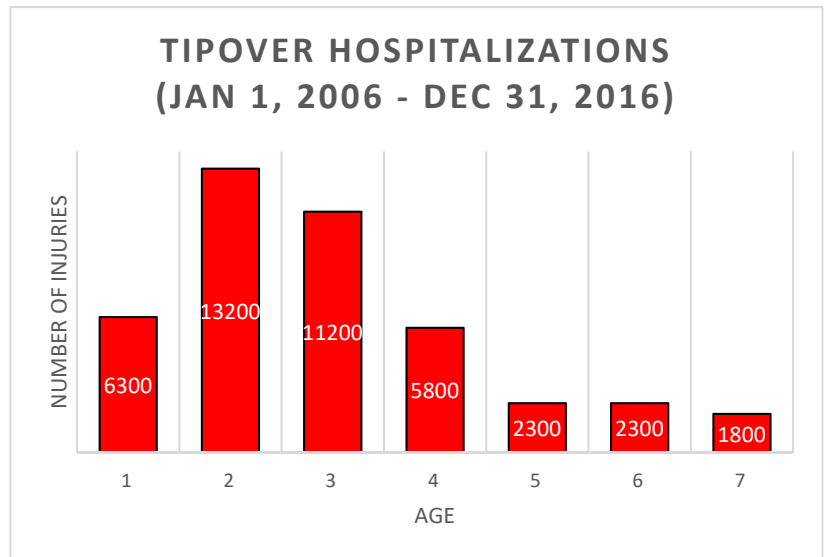
Parents know keeping their children safe is job number one, but they may not be aware of the dangers furniture designed with an instability risk poses to their children. They may assume that products they purchase have been tested and are safe. This is why Safe Kids has made educating parents about how important it is to anchor furniture to the wall to prevent tipovers a priority.

We appreciate the role the CPSC plays in home safety. Congress has stated clearly that a vital part of the agency's mission is to examine and prioritize product risks involving children. We urge the CPSC to help keep our nation's children safe by creating a final rule for a mandatory standard to help prevent CSU tipovers.

Public-Private Partnership on Consumer Safety is Important, Requires Trust

We respect the public-private partnership that has developed between agencies like the CPSC and non-profit safety advocates such as Safe Kids, Kids in Danger and the Consumer Federation. Trust between

The Very Youngest Children Are at Greatest Risk



Source: Consumer Product Safety Commission, Available at <https://www.anchorit.gov/>



industry, government agencies and non-profit watchdogs is fundamental. There are times when voluntary guidelines have been successful, and we support the work of organizations such as ASTM, UL and others; in fact, we participate in the ASTM process. However, there are times when the CPSC must step in to mandate a set of guidelines to ensure children's safety around these products. This is the case with clothing storage units.

Tipovers of furniture such as dressers have taken and threatened the lives of too many children. Thus, Safe Kids Worldwide applauds the CPSC's decision to begin this regulatory process, and ultimately adopt standards for furniture such as dressers. We understand that there is the ongoing ASTM process to strengthen the voluntary standard, and we support that.

It is smart policy given the dangers posed by dressers to pursue both avenues. We also urge industry to be proactive in their design and manufacture of furniture to prevent tipovers.

Evidence Supports the Need for a Mandatory Standard:

The CPSC has been diligent in responding to reports of television and furniture tipovers. One of its important jobs is to collect data: the CPSC has determined that there have been too many clothing storage unit (CSU)-related injuries and deaths. Between 2010 and 2017, 195 children died in tipover tragedies and 65,200 injuries were reported in US hospitals in the same period:¹ 86% of these incidents involved children under 18 years old, mostly ages 2 and 3. The *Anchor It!* Campaign estimates that 15,600 people are injured every year because of tipovers.²

Tragedy Highlights the Need for a Mandatory Standard:

Over more than twenty years, 65 million Ikea Malm dressers were sold around the world.³ This inexpensive furniture was the subject of a "repair program" in July 2015—as distinguished from a "recall"—because of their instability when not anchored to a wall.⁴ Following more tragedies, the CPSC acted again, this time using the standard "recall" language. The recall involved 29 million units of Malm furniture that may have been in U.S. homes.

The last prominent tragedy occurred in May 2017. It happened when the mother of two-year-old Jozef Dudek of California put him down for a nap, but he stayed awake playing in his room. He was killed when an Ikea Malm dresser tipped over on him.⁵ His parents describe him as a "happy boy with a huge, loving heart and an adventurous spirit."⁶ He is at least the eighth child who has died from a tipover incident involving this product.

Despite the historic nature of the recall and a public awareness campaign, the response rate has been lackluster. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* estimates that only 882,500 Malm dressers were returned to Ikea stores, which accounts for only 3 percent of the total number of recalled furniture. Oregon pediatrician Ben Hoffman, an active member of the American Academy of Pediatrics said, "If the recall had truly been successful, nobody would be hurt any longer. And the fact that a child in California is dead, it's inexcusable."⁷

We Need a Mandatory Standard for Furniture:

We applaud the Commission in its efforts to grow awareness with its "Anchor It!" campaign.⁸

Having a CPSC-set mandatory standard on CSUs is the most effective measure we can have to give require international furniture manufacturers to build safer products to reduce the risk of tipovers



We support the Commission's effort to consider a mandatory standard. If the ASTM arrives at a stronger, voluntary standard in a more expedited fashion, that would be a positive step. However, given the serious dangers unstable CSUs pose to children we believe a mandatory standard is required.

Based on the foregoing, Safe Kids Worldwide and twenty Safe Kids coalitions support the implementation of a mandatory standard to reduce the risk of clothing storage unit tipover incidents involving our nation's most precious resource, our children.

Sincerely,

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Safe Kids Delaware, Kim O'Malley
Safe Kids District of Columbia, Chenille Holloman
Safe Kids Hawaii, Lisa Dau
Safe Kids Illinois, Amy Hill
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Safe Kids Kansas, Cherie Sage
Safe Kids Massachusetts, Deirdre Walsh
Safe Kids Minnesota, Erin Petersen

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Safe Kids North Dakota, Carma Hanson
Safe Kids Ohio, Heather Trnka
Safe Kids Pennsylvania, Ashley Graves
Safe Kids Rhode Island, Dina Burstein
Safe Kids Vermont, Chrissy Keating
Safe Kids Washington, Will Hitchcock
Safe Kids Wisconsin, Libbe Slavin
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¹ Federal Register, Clothing Storage Unit Tip Overs; Request for Comments and Information, November 2017. Accessed 01.29.2018. Available at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/11/30/2017-25779/clothing-storage-unit-tip-overs-request-for-comments-and-information>

² *Anchor It!* campaign website. Accessed 01.29.2018. Available at <https://www.anchorit.gov/>

³ Fortune, "Ikea Is Still Selling a Dresser Cited in the Deaths of Three Toddlers. Here's Why.", May 6, 2016. Accessed on February 20, 2018. Available at: <http://fortune.com/2016/05/06/ikea-recall-dresser-malm/>

⁴ United States Consumer Product Safety Commission, Ikea Offers Free Wall Anchoring Repair Kit for Chests and Dressers Due to Tip-over Hazard After Two Children Died, July 2015. Accessed on February 6, 2018. Available at <https://www.cpsc.gov/content/ikea-offers-free-wall-anchoring-repair-kit-for-chests-and-dressers-due-to-tip-over-hazard>

⁵ ABC News, "8th child reported killed by recalled Ikea dresser", October 19, 2017. Accessed on January 31, 2018. Available at <http://abcnews.go.com/US/eighth-child-reported-killed-recalled-ikea-dresser/story?id=50593972>

⁶ Rose Hills Memorial Park & Mortuaries, *In Memory of Jozef Wallace Dudek*, May 2017. Accessed on 2/6/2018. Available at: <http://obits.dignitymemorial.com/dignity-memorial/obituary.aspx?n=Jozef-Dudek&lc=7067&pid=185699898&mid=7425962>

⁷ *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, "After historic Ikea dresser recall, another child has died", October 18, 2017. Accessed on 02/06/2018. Available at <http://www.philly.com/philly/news/politics/ikea-dresser-recall-death-malm-20171018.html>

⁸ *Anchor It!* campaign website. Accessed 01.29.2018. Available at <https://www.anchorit.gov/>