

Toothpick Crossbows: Risk to Children

Letter to Consumer Product Safety Commission Initiated by Safe Kids Worldwide, joined by American Academy of Pediatrics, Child Injury Prevention Alliance, Consumer Federation, Kids in Danger

April 25, 2018

Honorable Anne Marie Buerkle
Acting Chair
Consumer Product Safety Commission
4330 East West Highway, Room 724
Bethesda, MD 20814-4408

Honorable Elliot Kaye
Commissioner
Consumer Product Safety Commission
4330 East West Highway, Room 724
Bethesda, MD 20814-4408

Honorable Marietta Robinson
Commissioner
Consumer Product Safety Commission
4330 East West Highway, Room 724
Bethesda, MD 20814-4408

Honorable Robert Adler
Commissioner
Consumer Product Safety Commission
4330 East West Highway, Room 724
Bethesda, MD 20814-4408

Dear Acting Chair Buerkle and Members of the Commission:

We write with concern about the potential risk to children from miniature toy crossbows that can shoot toothpicks, needles, nails and other sharp projectiles. These products have already injured children in China, and are now available in the United States. We ask the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission to look into these products and consider acting swiftly to prevent them from harming children.

Pediatricians have voiced concern that metal projectiles fired from these toys could strike the eye, enter the ear, or even penetrate a child's bones.¹ According to press reports, a 10-year-old child in Xinjiang, China was struck in the eye by a toothpick fired from one of these crossbows and suffered permanent eyesight damage.² These crossbows can now be purchased in the United States online for as little as \$4 – seemingly at a cut rate “fire sale” price intended to move a product the manufacturer anticipates will soon be banned.^{3,4}

These crossbows pose a dangerous but easily preventable hazard to children. In addition, it would appear that the Commission's authority to act to prevent “substantial product hazards” would permit timely action to get these products off the market. We urge the Commission to seize the opportunity and get in front of this developing child safety issue, before injuries begin occurring in homes and classrooms.

We encourage the Commission to act quickly to keep these crossbows out of the U.S. marketplace and the hands of kids.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Pediatrics
Child Injury Prevention Alliance
Consumer Federation of America

Kids In Danger
Safe Kids Worldwide

¹ Ghose, T. (2017). Toothpick Crossbow: What They Are, How They Work, and Safety Concerns. *Live Science*. Available at: <https://www.livescience.com/59630-toothpick-crossbows-fags.html>

² Wang, S. (2017). China Cracks Down on Latest Fad Toy: Toothpick Crossbows. *CNN*. Available at: <https://www.cnn.com/2017/06/23/china/china-toothpick-crossbow/index.html>

³ Metal Stainless Steel Mini Crossbow Bow Arrow Kids Shooting Toy Decor. (n.d.). *ebay.com*. Available at: <https://www.ebay.com/i/282817559449?chn=ps&var=582144398707&displtem=1>

⁴ We have also found these crossbows available for sale via online retailers [Amazon](#), [Wish](#), and [Newegg](#)

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