

## Four Ways to Find Safer Toys This Year

Take these tips into consideration when selecting that perfect gift for your child this holiday.

by G. Grant Dixon  
Community contributor

**G**littering packages with pretty bows carefully placed under a beautifully decorated tree is the postcard picture that most people have when thinking about Christmastime.

And while the toys inside those packages are usually safe, many are not. Sometimes the hazards are obvious, but more often they are not. All can injure or kill an unsuspecting child.

What is a parent to do so they know the toys they buy their children are safe? There are some steps that can help reduce the risk to both parent and child:

### 1. Check the recall list.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission is responsible for making sure all consumer products in the US including toys, are safe.

Parents should check the agency's website, [cpsc.gov](http://cpsc.gov) to see if the toy has been recalled.

### 2. Look for independent testing.

Unfortunately, the CPSC does not have the resources to test every product. The agency is forced to rely on the manufacturer



G. Grant Dixon is an attorney in La Grange.  
Photo courtesy of G. Grant Dixon

to comply with regulations and, many times, they don't. Some independent companies do test toys for safety compliance.

For example, the magazine Consumer Reports tests many toys. Other not-for-profit agencies test toys as well. Look for testing on your child's toy before you buy.

### 3. Inspect it yourself.

While it will never replace compliance with safety standards, when you purchase a toy, you can do some basic inspection. Look for loose parts and sharp corners.

Examine the toy for cracking or loose paint.

If the toy has batteries, make sure the battery compartment has a tight latch and is not easily opened. If the toy has removable magnetic parts, throw those away. Many children have been injured or killed by swallowing magnets.

### 4. Register the toy and keep your receipt.

If the toy has a registration form (now often online), register the product. If the product is recalled, that is the best and fastest way to get notified.

The holidays are fun and exciting times. By following these simple steps, you can help make sure those times are full of holiday cheer and not a trip to the emergency room.

## IN BRIEF

### G. Grant Dixon is a La Grange-based Attorney

G. Grant Dixon III is the founder of the Dixon Law Office in La Grange. As a trial lawyer, he represents plaintiffs in all forms of personal injury and wrongful death cases matters.

Dixon has spent nearly his entire career representing the rights of injured victims and obtained millions of dollars in compensation for his clients. Dixon was a litigator at Corboy & Demetrio in Chicago for nearly 10 years. His cases have included automobile accidents, medical malpractice, product liability cases, slip and fall cases and more.

He is a frequent speaker and has authored more than a dozen articles, chapters, and papers.—**G. Grant Dixon**



Photo by Alex Keown