

FAQ's on the Drop Side Crib Recall Announcement



In a coordinated effort to allay fears about drop side cribs, seven manufacturers issued a voluntary crib announcement in conjunction with the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). As part of this effort, the CPSC has acknowledged that issues with drop sides can occur due to misassembly or age-related wear and tear and are advising consumers to get new cribs if their cribs are older than 10 years of age. JPMA is focusing its efforts on safe sleep initiatives which the CPSC has acknowledged. Included in CPSC messaging is an acknowledgment that many times more infants are at risk from being placed in unsafe sleeping environments than in a perfectly safe crib, as well as acknowledgment that cribs are the safest place for infants to sleep. JPMA has created this list of Frequently Asked Questions to help retailers respond to customer inquiries.

Are all manufacturers providing a device to immobilize the drop sides of the cribs included in the recall?

Some, but not all manufacturers are offering a device to immobilize the drop sides for cribs manufactured at different periods of time between 2000 and 2009.

Where can I find a list of manufacturers providing an immobilization device?

For a list of manufacturers providing an immobilization device visit www.cribsafety.org. One manufacturer, Childcraft, is out of business so no immobilizer is available. Childcraft is providing a decal kit and supplemental instruction sheet for certain models. Separately, they are offering a rebate coupon for the purchase of a new crib for select drop side models produced between 2000 and 2009.

Are any of the cribs being sold today?

No, this announcement does not involve cribs that are currently being sold.

Is this a Recall of all Drop Side Cribs?

This is a voluntary action on behalf of a group of crib manufacturers to provide immobilization hardware or other solutions to consumers who are concerned about drop sides on previously sold cribs. For those providing the immobilization, the hardware will secure the drop sides, preventing them from moving.



Are Drop Side Cribs Defective?

Properly assembled and maintained drop side cribs have been in safe use for decades. They are not inherently defective. However, since December 2009 manufacturers have been producing cribs to a new ASTM standard that restricts traditional drop sides and we believe this same requirement will be adopted as part of new mandatory federal requirements later this year. The mere fact that there were hardware complaints on drop sides over time doesn't mean they are defective. Such complaints are within the range of a reasonably expected complaint rate due to a variety of causes over many years. Please note that drop side incidents can occur due to incorrect assembly and with age related wear and tear—something that CPSC recognizes.

What is JPMA's stance on the safety of drop sides that haven't been recalled and may be in stores or homes? Are they safe?

Our position is that these cribs are perfectly safe, when used and assembled in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, and provided they are not damaged or broken.

If there's no problem why "Recall" the cribs?

CPSC uses the word "Recall" to describe all product-related actions, including repair and provision of new or additional parts. We have recommended that they consider using alternate language so that consumers are not confused and think they need to return the product. Please note that this is not a recall of the product, but rather a recall that offers interested consumers a safe way to immobilize drop sides on their cribs or other solutions so they can conform to the latest standards.

Is JPMA still certifying drop side cribs?

In accordance with the timing set when the new standard was adopted, JPMA began certifying to the 2009 standard on June 1, 2010. The '09 version of the standard does eliminate the traditional drop side mechanism in addition to a number of other safety enhancements. We understand that almost all manufacturers have been producing cribs to that standard since it passed.



As a parent or caregiver, should I discontinue use of my drop side crib?

As long as they are properly assembled, fully functional and not subject to a recall, drop side cribs can be safely used. If you own a crib that is part of the recall announced, we strongly recommend that parents follow the corrective action of the company and the CPSC relative to this recall. For additional information, contact the manufacturers or visit the CPSC at www.cpsc.gov.

What should I inspect on my drop side crib?

When using a drop side crib parents and caregivers should check to make sure the drop side or any other parts are not missing or damaged and that they operate properly. Parents should be sure that hardware is installed properly. When assembling and disassembling drop side cribs, parents should always confirm that the crib is reassembled following the manufacturer's instructions. Instructions are attached to all cribs when sold; if they are missing, contact the manufacturer for a replacement copy.

Should I stop using a properly working drop side crib?

No. The safest place for a child is in a fully functional, properly assembled crib that is not part of a recall that is in good condition as it provides the safest sleep environment for children. This is true for ALL cribs. Each year hundreds of deaths occur when children are placed to sleep in an environment that is not specifically designed for them. Many times more infants die each year when they are placed in unsafe sleep environments.

NEVER place infants to sleep on pillows, sofa cushions, adult beds, waterbeds, beanbags, or any other surface not specifically designed for infant sleep. NEVER place the crib near windows, draperies, blinds, or wall mounted decorative accessories with long cords.

JPMA reminds parents and care givers, that when you assemble a crib to the manufacturer's instructions and use it properly, a crib provides the safest sleeping environment for baby.

What is JPMA's stance on federal efforts to ban drop side cribs?

JPMA members led the way in eliminating traditional drop sides from the voluntary standard in 2009 and we were instrumental in providing tremendous resources in terms of technical expertise, testing, manpower and dollars to answer Chairman Tenenbaum's call for making this standard mandatory. We are on record as favoring adoption of the ASTM standard as a mandatory federal regulation and are ahead of the federal government in this regard.



What is Baby Safety Month?

Each year, JPMA sponsors Baby Safety Month in September; and in 2010, JPMA is dedicating Baby Safety Month to safe sleep practices. JPMA initiated Baby Safety Month to educate parents and caregivers on the importance of the safe selection and use of juvenile products. The multifaceted campaign aimed at safe sleep education includes a safe sleep website, www.cribsafety.org in which users can easily access a range of information pertaining to how to create a safe sleep environment, as well as a series of informative videos demonstrating safe sleep practices. The safe sleep website also offers a repository of information that links consumers directly to the parts, hardware and assembly instruction sections on several crib manufacturers' websites, all accessible from one convenient location.

JPMA will expand its Safe Sleep Campaign by embarking this September on a five-city education and sleep product donation tour to help provide safe sleep environments to children most in need. As part of the program, JPMA will provide both donated cribs and safe sleep education materials.

What are your recommendations about "safe sleep" practices?

The safest place for a child is in a fully functional, properly assembled crib. It's also important to remember these basic guidelines to create a safe sleep environment for your baby:

- For the safest product use, be sure to always read and follow all manufacturers' instructions. It is recommended that second-hand products not be used for baby. However, if it is necessary to use older products, make sure they have been correctly assembled, well maintained and have not been recalled. Refer to crib manufacturers' instructions and websites for information. Keep in mind that new products meeting current safety standards are the safest option.
- Don't forget to inspect products frequently for missing hardware, loose threads and strings, holes and tears. The practice of co-sleeping, or sharing a bed with your infant, is controversial, a personal decision and one that should not be taken lightly. It's important to weigh the pros and cons and consider room sharing as a safer alternative. More information is available at (www.cribsafety.org).
- Parents should not use any crib with missing, broken or loose hardware parts. Crib slats or spindles should be spaced no more than 2 3/8 inches apart, and none should be loose or missing. Also NEVER use a crib with corner posts over 1/16 of an inch above the end panels (unless they're over 16 inches high for a canopy).



- NEVER place infants to sleep on pillows, sofa cushions, adult beds, waterbeds, beanbags, or any other surface not specifically designed for infant sleep. NEVER place the crib near windows, draperies, blinds, or wall mounted decorative accessories with long cords.
- When using a drop side crib parents and care givers should check to make sure the drop side or any other moving parts operate properly. Parents should be sure that hardware is installed properly. When assembling and disassembling drop side cribs, parents should always confirm that the parts are reassembled following the manufacturers guidelines as listed in the instructions.
- Always check all sides and corners of the crib to assure proper assembly with no openings that may entrap a child. The crib mattress should fit snugly with no more than two fingers width, one-inch, between the edge of the mattress and the crib side. Otherwise, the baby can get trapped between the mattress and the side of the crib.
- Do not try to repair any side of the crib without manufacturer approved hardware.
- Putting a broken side up against the wall does not solve the problem and can often make it worse.

Parents can be confident that **properly assembled fully functional cribs that are not part of a recall**, and are in good condition are safe for use and provide the safest sleep environment for children. This recall highlights the importance of periodically checking the hardware on your crib for any loose or broken parts and to make sure all fasteners and screws are tight. Parents are also urged to closely inspect the hardware and stability of their cribs to ensure all parts are in place and secure when assembling and re-assembling cribs. Manufacturers offer replacement instructions and manufacturer authorized parts for their cribs. Makeshift hardware should never be used.