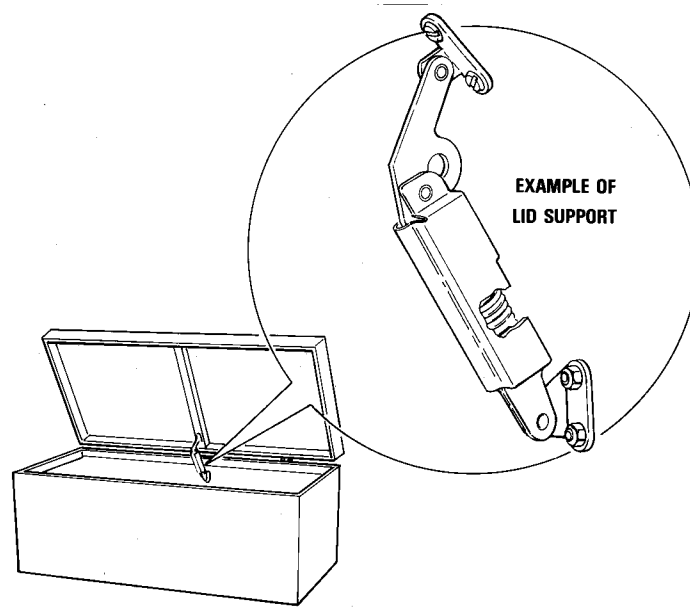


Consumer Product Safety Alert

FROM THE U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

CPSC Warns Consumers of Dangers With Toy Chest Lids



The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) knows of 45 children who died when lids of containers used for toy storage fell on their heads or necks. There have been at least three incidents of permanent brain damage. Many deaths involved products specifically manufactured as toy boxes or chests, although children have died in other containers used for toy storage, such as trunks, footlockers, decorator cubes, and blanket chests. Fatal suffocation incidents have also happened when children climbed into storage containers such as cedar chests to play or hide and became trapped.

Typically, accidents occurred when children used the chest to pull themselves up, causing the lid to fall from the upright, open position, and when young children attempted to open the lids themselves. Children were reaching over and into the chest when the lid dropped and either fell on their heads or trapped them at the neck between the lid and the edge of the toy chest.

CPSC recommends that parents and guardians of young children avoid any toy chest or other container which has a hinged lid that can fall freely. Open chests or bins which have no lids; chests with lightweight,

removable lids; or chests with sliding doors or panels will not present the risk of a falling lid. If they do choose a new toy chest with a vertically opening lid, parents should look for a chest which uses a lid support that will hold the lid open in any position in which it is placed. Parents should check the support provided to make sure that it does, in fact, prevent the lid from falling.

If consumers already own a chest or trunk that has a freely falling, hinged lid, CPSC recommends that the lid be completely removed to avert possible tragedy. Alternatively, parents may wish to install a lid support which will hold the lid open in any position. Once a support is installed, it is important to check it frequently to make certain that it is working properly. Some supports may need to be adjusted or tightened periodically so that they continue to hold the lid open.

For further information, consumers may call the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's toll-free hotline on 800-638-CPSC. A teletypewriter number for the hearing impaired is 800-638-8270 .