

Let's celebrate gift-giving safely

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Feature Reporter

It isn't hard to shop for children, but some gifts can lead to you being kicked out of the family. This Christmas, make sure you use common sense when you are buying for small children.

Some gifts to avoid this season due to choking hazard are the "to-big-for-my-trachea" jigsaw puzzle and the hula noose.

There is a Tickle Me Elmo reappearing on store shelves this Holiday Season, called the Light-Me-On-Fire Elmo. I strongly recommend giving this as a gift this holiday to aspiring arsonists in the family, but unfortunately it is for ages 12 and up.

But for those younger pyromaniacs, the E-Z Bake Open Flame Oven is a "hot" gift. This is also great for those up and coming Chefs.

Plastic is the soul of modern day Christmas. Nearly

every toy on the market has parts or is completely made out of plastic. Until recently, we believed plastic was just hunky dory.

A researcher in San Francisco sent several children's toys to a test lab in Chicago to be tested for dangerous chemicals. They found many dangerous carcinogens in toys made for children.

One of these chemicals, bisphenol A, is used to harden or soften plastic. It causes hormonal malfunctions, which can stunt developing children and alter the normal way genes work. This can be disastrous to children because they are constantly growing, but it is not as harmful to full grown adults.

Quite a number of toys exceed the limit of these cancer-causing agents including a prestigious company's teething ring and the common rubber ducky. These each contain ten times the proposed legal limit of chemicals in children's goods.

not comply with chemical safety limit laws.

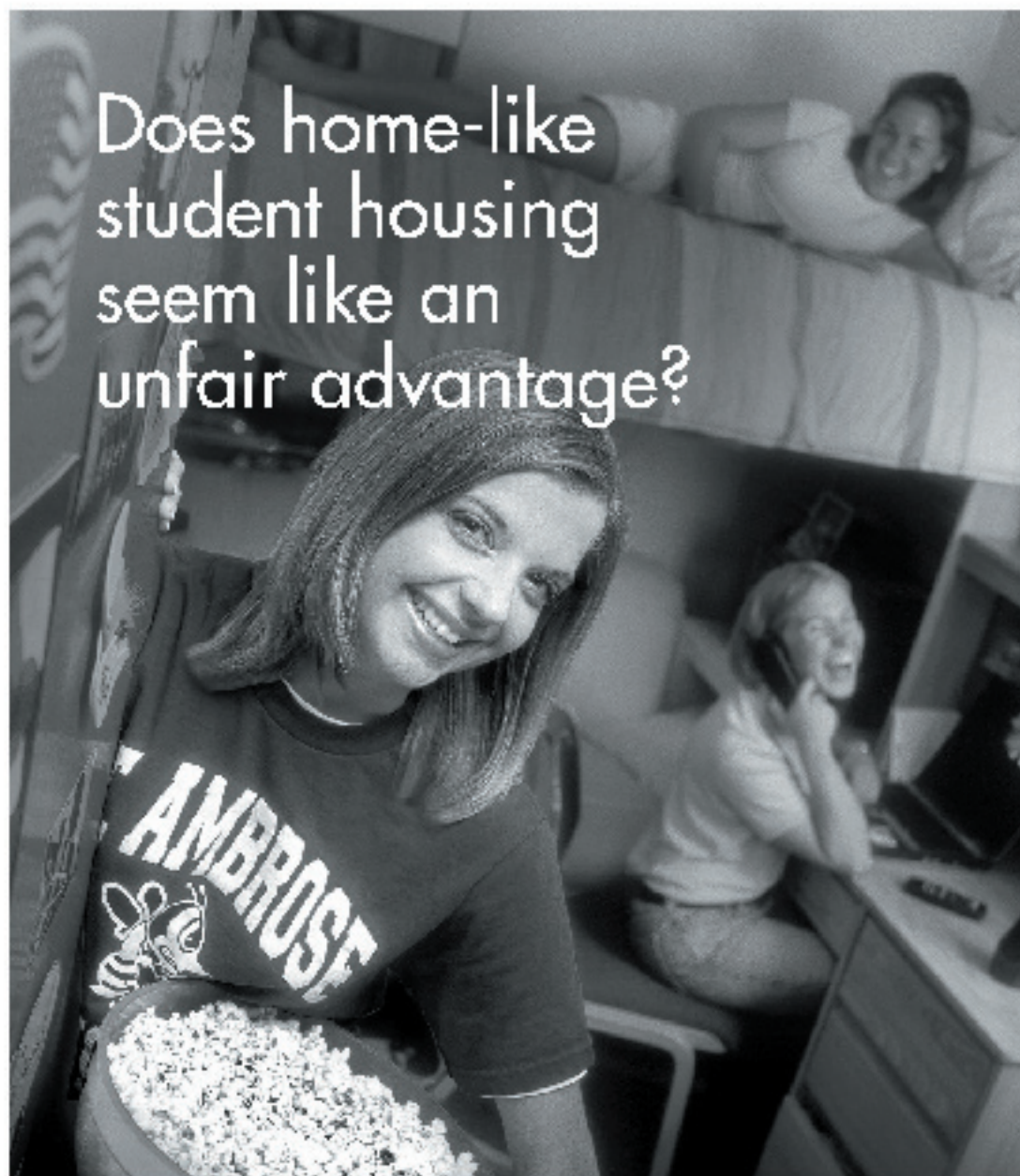
Items that would exceed these limits would include most bath supplies for children such as water proof books, rubber ducks, teething rings, and any toy marketed to children 6 years old or older.

Magnetic toys pose a risk if more than one magnet is swallowed. Multiple magnets will pull towards each other, causing severe internal damage.

Lead is often found in children's jewelry. In February, a girl died after swallowing a charm on a piece of jewelry that was made of lead. Children's jewelry has been known to contain up to 34% lead.

Remember to use common sense when shopping for gifts. Obviously, never give a child anything that can kill them.

This includes small parts that toddlers can choke on. The main rule of thumb is: If their mother wouldn't give it to them, you shouldn't either.



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