

from the  
Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association

*Safe & Sound*  
for baby



a guide to  
baby product  
safety, use & selection  
[www.jpma.org](http://www.jpma.org)

Creating a safe environment for baby is the best thing you can do to ensure the first years are happy and healthy. Raising your bundle of joy takes care and knowledge. Being more aware of the products in and around your home is just another step that will become second nature as a baby grows.

To help you create a safe environment, the Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association (JPMA) created this informative booklet, which highlights the products you might need or want for your baby and how to use them correctly. The booklet also provides product tips to consider when taking care of your baby. Additionally, there are a few basic facts to ALWAYS remember:

- **Adult Supervision** – The only sure-fire way to keep your baby safe is direct supervision when juvenile products are in use.
- **Read Instructions and Warnings** – For the safest product use, be sure to always read and follow all manufacturers' instructions and warning labels.
- **Second-Hand Products** – It is recommended second-hand products should not be used for baby. However, if it is necessary to use older products, make sure they have all of the safety features outlined in this booklet, all parts are available, the product is fully functional, not broken, and has not been recalled.
- **Safest Option** – Keep in mind that new products meeting current safety standards are the safest option.
- **Inspection During Use** – Don't forget to frequently inspect products for missing hardware, loose threads and strings, holes, and tears.

- **Discontinue Use** – Monitor your child's growth and development. Discontinue using a product as your baby reaches the limits defined by the manufacturer.

A new baby brings joy to your life; a life that will change for the better in an exciting way. By using this booklet as a point of reference, you and your baby will enjoy many smiling moments to come.

# Certification Program



The first step in keeping a baby safe is careful selection of juvenile products. To help with your decisions, JPMA has developed a unique certification program and certification seal that have been guiding parents and caregivers for more than 30 years. Through the JPMA Certification Program, products are tested by independent test laboratories to confirm compliance with the current safety standard before the certification seal can be applied.

More than 2,000 products are JPMA Certified in 17 different categories: bassinets/cradles, bath seats, portable bed rails, infant bouncers, high chairs, play yards/non-full size cribs, walkers, carriages/strollers, gates/enclosures, full-size cribs, portable hook-on chairs, infant swings, hand-held infant carriers, soft infant carriers, stationary activity centers, changing tables, and toddler beds.

JPMA continues to support standards development for other product categories that are used the most strenuously and frequently and will expand the program by adding these categories in the future.

The JPMA Certification Program is based on ASTM Standards. ASTM International, a highly regarded non-profit organization, develops and publishes the standards. Industry members,

consumer groups and staff from the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) also are involved in developing the standards.

Certification is conducted separately for each product category and each product made by a manufacturer must be subjected to a battery of rigorous testing. Once all products have passed laboratory testing, they are then marked with the distinctive JPMA Certification Seal as shown above, letting you know that the product meets or exceeds the requirements of the current safety standard.

If you are interested in a product, but unsure if it is JPMA certified, ask your retailer for assistance or call the manufacturer directly. As an alternative, you also can visit the JPMA Web site at [www.jpma.org](http://www.jpma.org) for a listing of certified product manufacturers for each product category.

Be sure to look for the JPMA Certification Seal on the product or retail package for added assurance the product was built with safety in mind.



## Bassinets/Cradles

A bassinet is likely to be the very first bed for your baby. While it is perfectly acceptable and safe to introduce your baby to a full-sized crib from the onset, traditionally parents use a bassinet for the first few weeks or months of a baby's life.

### Tips for Selecting Product

- Look for one with a sturdy bottom and a wide, stable base.
- Mattress or mattress pad should fit snugly and be firm and smooth.
- Swinging cradles should have a way to keep them from swinging once a baby is asleep.
- Look for the JPMA Certification Seal.

### Tips for Use

- Follow the manufacturer's guidelines on the appropriate weight and size of babies who can safely use the bassinet or cradle.
- Check screws and bolts periodically to ensure they are tight.
- If the product has legs that fold for storage, make sure that effective locks are provided to ensure that the legs do not accidentally fold while in use.
- Only use the mattress provided by the manufacturer. Never use pillows or add extra padding.
- Decorative bows and ribbons should be trimmed short and stitched securely to prevent strangulation.

## Bath Seats

A bath seat gives your child added support while in the bathtub, but it will not protect him or her from injury or drowning. Keep the following in mind while using a bath seat or bath ring:

### Tips for Selecting Product

- Before leaving home, check your tub for smooth, textured or non-skid surfaces as this can affect your purchase selection.
- Bath seats and bath rings should be used with children who are capable of sitting upright unassisted. Discontinue use when a child can pull to a standing position.
- Look for the JPMA Certification Seal.

### Tips for Use

- NEVER leave baby unattended. If you need to leave the bathroom, take the baby with you. Do not rely on older children to watch the baby for you.
- Collect all bathing materials before bringing baby into the bathroom.
- Never use a bath seat on textured or non-skid tub surfaces unless the manufacturer's instructions specifically state the seat is intended for such surfaces.
- Place the bath seat in the tub so baby cannot reach the faucet or spout.
- After running a minimum amount of warm water in the tub, carefully place baby into the bath seat.
- If bath seat moves or tips while your child is in it, discontinue use.

## Carriages and Strollers

Carriages and strollers perform a tremendous service to parents and child caregivers. These vehicles make it easier to safely transport a child. Now more than ever, there are so many to choose from. Whichever style you decide on, be sure you follow these easy tips for safe use:

### Tips for Selecting Product

- Check for adjustments that reduce the size of seat openings in the front to prevent your baby from falling out when seat back is reclined into the flat position.
- Choose a carriage or stroller that has a base wide enough to prevent tipping, even when your baby leans over the side.
- If the seat adjusts to a reclining position, make sure the carriage or stroller doesn't tip backwards when the child lies down.
- Look for the JPMA Certification Seal.

### Tips for Use

- ALWAYS secure the baby by using the restraint straps.
- Don't hang pocketbooks or shopping bags over the handles of the carriage or stroller. If your stroller has a shopping basket for carrying packages, it should be low on the back of the stroller or directly over the rear wheels.
- Use the locking device to prevent accidental folding.
- Apply the brakes to limit rotation of the wheels when stroller is stationary.
- When you fold or unfold the stroller, keep the baby's hands away from the areas that could pinch tiny fingers.

## Carriers (Soft/Frame) and Swings

Carriers and swings continue to grow in popularity with parents and caregivers. A carrier provides comfort and security for the baby while allowing mom or dad some freedom. If your baby responds well to the motion, a swing can provide much-needed quiet, hands-free time in those early months.

### Tips for Selecting Product

#### CARRIER

- If you use a soft carrier, select one made of a durable, washable fabric with sturdy, adjustable straps.
- Baby should fit snugly in the carrier with the head supported and weight evenly distributed.
- A frame-style carrier can be used when baby can sit up unassisted.

#### SWING

- Select a swing with strong posts, legs, and a wide stance to prevent tipping.
- Look for the JPMA Certification Seal.

### Tips for Use:

#### CARRIER

- A carrier should only be used when walking with the baby.
- Carriers should not be used for transporting baby in a car or on a bicycle.
- Be sure baby's weight is evenly distributed in the carrier and all safety straps are secured.
- Check the carrier periodically for sharp edges, ripped seams, and missing or loose snaps.

#### SWING

- NEVER leave baby in a swing unattended.



## Car Seats and Belt Positioning Booster Car Seats

An important responsibility begins with selecting a child car seat and using it properly from the moment you bring the baby home to every car ride after that. All 50 states have laws that require the use of a car seat. All car seats manufactured today must be designed to meet stringent safety standards set by the Federal government.

Here are a few things to remember for proper use and installation of a child's car seat and belt positioning booster car seat:

- ALWAYS follow all manufacturers' instructions for both the vehicle and the car seat or booster car seat.
- Be sure the car seat/booster car seat is appropriate for a child's weight and height.
- The back seat is the safest place for children 12 and under to ride.
- Infants, less than one year of age, must ride rear-facing or in a car bed. NEVER place a rear-facing car seat in a seating location with a frontal air bag.
- Always anchor the car seat/booster car seat to the car using the LATCH attachment system or vehicle seat belt exactly as directed by the car seat/booster car seat manufacturer.
- NEVER use a forward-facing car seat/booster car seat in a seating location with a frontal airbag unless recommended in your specific vehicle by the vehicle manufacturer. Follow the manufacturers' instructions.
- Always check that the car seat/booster car seat is securely installed. A locking clip or belt lock-off may be necessary on some vehicle lap and shoulder belts. Read the vehicle owner's manual for information on other belt accessories that may be required.
- Do not use a car seat/booster car seat more than six years old.
- Do not use a car seat/booster car seat that has ever been involved in a crash.
- Do not use a car seat/booster car seat missing the manufacturer's label showing the name of the manufacturer, model number, and date of manufacture.

- Booster car seats are recommended for children over 30 lbs., but consider height and maturity level as well. Some children are mature enough to handle a booster car seat, while others are unable to remain sitting properly in the adult lap and shoulder belt or keep the vehicle shoulder belt properly positioned.
- Set a good example and make sure the entire family buckles up.
- NEVER buy a used car seat or booster car seat.
- Air Travel – taking your child's car seat along when traveling is recommended. Most car seats except belt positioning booster car seats are approved for use on aircraft. Booster car seats are not approved as a lap and shoulder belt are not available on the aircraft. Pack your booster car seat as luggage so you have it at your destination.



## Changing Tables

A changing table in the nursery provides a safe, and convenient place to change and dress baby. There are many different types of changing tables, including those that have a built-in dresser or add-on units that can be used on other furniture. Whichever version you choose, be sure to follow these tips when changing baby:

### Tips for Selecting Product

- When selecting a changing table, look for one with elevated sides that help prevent the baby from falling.
- For add-on units, before leaving home measure the length and width of the changing area available on the dresser or use location and then compare to the requirements for the add-on unit before purchasing. Also check for any requirements for attachment.
- Look for the JPMA Certification Seal.

### Tips for Use

- If the changing table is provided with a restraint system, ALWAYS use restraint system to restrain baby when the changing table is in use.
- ALWAYS keep one hand on the baby. Be sure any baby products you need, such as diapers or wipes, are easily accessible.
- NEVER turn your back on the baby when reaching for baby products.
- Most importantly, NEVER leave the baby unattended, even for the shortest moment.

## Full-Size Cribs

This first “home” should be cheerful and secure. Each year, approximately 50 babies suffocate or strangle when they become trapped between broken crib parts or in cribs with older, unsafe designs. Many older cribs, including the one that was used for you or your younger children, do not meet all current safety standards. Even if you are on a tight budget, you should not purchase an old crib at a garage sale or accept a hand-me-down that does not meet the following guidelines:

### Tips for Selecting Product

- Infants should ALWAYS sleep in a crib, which meets current Federal and ASTM standards.
- 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.
- No pillow-like bumpers.
- Look for the JPMA Certification Seal.

### Tips for Use

- Remember to ALWAYS keep the drop side up when the baby is in the crib.
- NEVER place the crib near windows, draperies, blinds, or wall mounted decorative accessories with long cords.
- Make sure there are no missing, loose, broken, or improperly installed screws, brackets or other hardware on the crib or the mattress support.
- Crib slats or spindles should be spaced no more than 2 3/8” apart, and none should be loose or missing.
- Never use a crib with corner posts over 1/16 of an inch above the end panels (unless they’re over 16” high for a canopy). Babies can strangle if their clothes become caught on corner posts. These should be unscrewed or sawed off, and the remaining end panel should be sanded smooth.
- No cutout areas on the headboard or footboard so baby’s head cannot get trapped.
- ALWAYS use a crib sheet that fits securely on the mattress, wraps around the mattress corners and stays securely on the mattress corners.
- No cracked or peeling paint.
- No splinters or rough edges.
- Use bumper pads only until the child can pull up to a standing position. Then remove them so baby cannot use the pads to climb out of the crib.
- Mobiles should also be removed when baby can pull himself or herself up.
- NEVER place infants to sleep on pillows, sofa cushions, adult beds, waterbeds, beanbags, or any other surface not specifically designed for infant sleep.

### For Babies Under 12 Months...

- Normal, healthy infants should ALWAYS sleep on their backs unless otherwise advised by a pediatrician.
- Only a fitted sheet, mattress pad, and/or waterproof pad should be used under baby.
- When baby is put to sleep, remove pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, pillow-like stuffed toys, and other pillow-like products from the crib.
- Cover baby with a thin covering, such as a crib blanket, receiving blanket or other blankets specifically designed for infants, only reaching as far as baby’s chest, and tuck the covering around the crib mattress. For newborns, consider swaddling.
- Do not overdress your baby. Consider using a sleeper, sleep sack, or other sleep clothing as an alternative to any covering.

## Gates and Enclosures

When baby can crawl, it's time to block doorways and stairways with gates. Be sure to ALWAYS follow all manufacturers' instructions for installation and use.

### Tips for Selecting Product

- Select the right gate for your needs. Before leaving home, measure the opening size at the location the gate will be used.
- Some gates are not appropriate for use at the top of a stairway. Check the product use recommendations.
  - Look for the JPMA Certification Seal.

### Tips for Use

- Gates with expanding pressure bars should be installed with the adjustment bar or lock side away from the baby.
- Anchor the gate securely in the doorway or stairway.
- Always close the gate when you leave the room and never leave the baby unattended.
- Many new "accordion style" gates meet the current performance standards. Older models could be hazardous.

## High Chairs

When the baby is hungry and ready to eat, feeding time can be hectic. By using a certified product and following these simple guidelines, using a high chair can be a great way to enjoy breakfast, lunch and dinner.

### Tips for Selecting Product

- High chairs should have a waist strap and crotch strap.
- Some high chairs recline for use with younger infants or are height adjustable.
- Look for the JPMA Certification Seal.

### Tips for Use

- Use waist and crotch restraint every time you place a child in the high chair to prevent falls from standing up or sliding out.
- Never depend on the feeding tray to restrain or protect baby. Instead, secure restraint straps.
- Prevent tip over – Keep high chair far enough from the table, counter or wall so the baby can't push off from it.
- Secure the safety latch on a folding high chair each time you unfold it for use.
- NEVER leave a baby unattended.

## Infant Seats /Bouncers

When you place the baby in an infant seat or bouncer seat, your baby is comfortably positioned and your hands are free. Many of today's styles are functional as well as entertaining.

### Tips for Selecting Product

- Infant Seats – For use in the home and many also are used as an infant car seat. Check the instruction manual for use. Never use as an infant car seat unless recommended by the manufacturer.
- Bouncer seats – For in-home use only. Many have bouncing action, soothing vibration, and/or toys for play.
- Look for the JPMA Certification Seal.

### Tips for Use

- NEVER leave a baby unattended.
- NEVER place on beds, sofas, or other soft surfaces. Infant seats or bouncer can roll over and suffocate a baby.
- ALWAYS secure the restraining straps and never leave a baby in the seat when straps are loose or undone.
- Baby's movements can slide an infant seat, so be sure not to place the infant seat near the edges of counter tops, tables or other elevated surfaces.
- Never use a bouncer seat on an elevated surface.
- Follow the manufacturer's minimum and maximum weight and age requirements.
- If the infant seat or bouncer seat has a canopy, use it when outdoors.

## Play Yards/ Non-Full-Size Cribs

Choose a play yard or non-full-size crib with the correct recommended height and weight of the child. (Remember to apply the same rules to portable play yards.)

### Tips for Selecting Product

- Choose a play yard with mesh holes no larger than 1/4". Slats on a wooden play yard should be no more than 2 3/8" apart.
- Look for the JPMA Certification Seal.

### Tips for Use

- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- The play yard, including side rails, should be fully erected prior to use.
- Do not add padding or other objects inside the play yard, which permit your child to climb out.
- Make sure all latching features of the play yard are in place and secure.
- Always provide the supervision necessary for the continued safety of your child. When used for playing, never leave child unattended.
- Infants can suffocate in gaps between a mattress too small or too thick and the sides, or on soft bedding.
  - Never add a mattress, pillow, comforter, or extra padding.
  - Use only the mattress/pad provided by the manufacturer.
- NEVER leave a baby in a mesh play yard if its drop side is in the down position. The baby could roll into the space between the pad and loose mesh, causing suffocation.
- NEVER place the crib near windows, draperies, blinds, or wall mounted decorative accessories with long cords.
- Never suspend strings over play yards or cribs or attach strings to toys.
- Check vinyl or fabric-covered rails frequently for holes and tears.
- Don't tie items across the top of the play yard as they can entangle a baby and cause strangulation.

## Portable Bed Rails

Portable bed rails provide added safety for children who have moved from the crib to an adult bed, helping to prevent a child from falling out of bed.

### Tips for Selecting Product

- Bed rails are not designed for infant use so do not use in place of a crib.
- Some beds have built-in bed rails but a portable bed rail is for use only with an adult mattress and box spring. Portable bed rails are not for use with bunk beds, water mattresses, or inflatable mattresses.
- Look for the JPMA Certification Seal.

### Tips for Use

- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for assembly and use.
- Use a bed rail only with a standard innerspring mattress and box spring.
- Do not use a bed rail on a bunk bed, water mattress, or bed without a box spring.
- Be sure to keep the bed rail firmly against the mattress when in use to prevent dangerous gaps.



## Portable Hook-on Chairs

As you head out for dinner at your favorite family restaurant, don't forget the portable hook-on chair for baby.

### Tips for Selecting Product

- Chair should have a strong clamp-on device, which keeps the seat level, making it impossible for a baby to kick off.
- Look for the JPMA Certification Seal.

### Tips for Use

- Do not use on a glass or loose tabletop, or on a table with a single pedestal, leaf, tablecloth or placemat.
- Check stability and sturdiness of table before seating a child.
- Do not place an ordinary chair under the portable hook-on chair.
- Always secure the waist and crotch straps around baby.
- Before removing baby from chair, make sure baby's legs are free from chair straps.

## Stationary Activity Centers

Stationary activity centers can be great fun for you and your baby. There are many styles to choose from to fit your budget and lifestyle.

### Tips for Selecting Product

- Product adjustments and features range from height adjustment to rocking, bouncing, and a variety of toys. Pick the product that best suits your baby.
- Look for the JPMA Certification Seal.

### Tips for Use

- Never leave your baby alone in the activity center.
- Keep away from stairs, doors, windows, plants, lamps, the TV, fireplace, heaters, or coffee table.
- Keep curtains and blind cords out of reach.
- Make sure if not new that your activity center is in good, stable condition.
- Be sure to follow manufacturers recommended age, weight, and height.



## Toddler Beds

When baby is ready to move out of the crib, be sure to follow these guidelines when selecting the right toddler bed:

### Tips for Selecting Product

- Choose a bed that is low to the ground so that there is less chance of injury if your child falls.
- Make sure that the bed is sturdy and not in danger of collapsing.
- Look for the JPMA Certification Seal.

### Tips for Use

- Check the joints periodically to make sure they are not loose.
- Place bed safely in room away from windows, heaters, wall lamps, drapes, and blind cords.
- Place headboard against wall rather than the side of the bed so that the child can't become trapped between wall and bed.

## Walkers

Make sure baby's first steps are safe steps. Most baby walker accidents happen when a baby is left unattended or has access to items that can injure them.

### Tips for Selecting Product

- Choose a sturdy walker with the correct recommended height and weight of the baby.
- Select a walker with a wheelbase longer and wider than the frame of the walker itself to ensure stability.
- Coil springs and hinges of walker must have protective coverings.
- Look for the JPMA Certification Seal.

### Tips for Use

- NEVER leave a baby unattended in a walker.
- Only use a walker on smooth surfaces.
- Remove all throw rugs when a baby is in walker.
- Keep stairways blocked with a gate or enclosure.
- Keep doors closed.
- Keep child away from appliances or items that could cause injury such as ironing boards, ranges, radiators, and fireplaces.
- NEVER carry walker with a child in it.
- JPMA discourages the use of second-hand products as they may not meet current safety standards. However, if you do choose a second-hand product, check the product's condition and proper function before use. A walker should have rubber strips under the lower frame or other design feature that restricts movement at the top of stairs. Check the operation of the walker at the top of the stairs. Never use a walker that moves freely over the top step of stairs.

## Crib Toys and Pacifiers

### Tips for Selecting Product

- Make sure a pacifier's protective shield has ventilation holes and is large enough so it can't fit inside baby's mouth.

### Tips for Use

- Take rattles, squeeze toys, teething toys and other items out of a baby's crib when a baby is sleeping or unattended.
- Check the pacifier frequently for holes or tears.
- Recent studies have shown pacifiers can be a SIDS risk reduction measure. Consider offering a pacifier at nap time and bedtime. Do not force an infant to use a pacifier. Do not reinsert a pacifier after the infant falls asleep and pacifiers should not be coated in any sweet solutions.

- Strings can cause strangulation! Never string a pacifier or any other item around baby's neck.
- Remove crib gyms and mobiles from the crib when a baby begins to push up on hands and knees.
- Mobiles and any other toys that hang over the crib should be out of reach.

### Feeding Tips

- When feeding a baby, first test all warmed foods for a comfortable eating temperature before serving.
- Heating baby food in a microwave is convenient, but be sure to check the temperature very carefully. Use microwave-safe dishes and stir food from the center out after heating to ensure the temperature is even.
- When baby begins to eat solid foods, do not give the child small, hard foods. Check with your pediatrician for a list of appropriate foods.
- Remember, a baby should always eat and drink in an upright position.
- Avoid propping a bottle on baby.



## Household Dangers

As a concerned parent or caregiver, your job is to childproof your home carefully so a baby can safely explore his or her world. It's a good idea to get down on your hands and knees and look around from a baby's perspective. This really helps spot potentially dangerous objects or conditions.

For example, an ordinary plant can be poisonous if a curious baby decides to taste it. Even toddler toys left lying around by an older sibling should not be in baby's reach. The most important place to have a safe environment is in your home.

When checking your home, it is also a good time to be sure a baby does not have access to swimming pools, toilets, cleaning buckets, bathtubs, showers, or hot tubs. It is possible for a baby to drown in as little as one inch of water.

Medicines, bleaches, oven and drain cleaners, paint solvents, polishes, waxes, matches, cigarettes, and lighters are also dangerous to a baby. These should always be kept out of a baby's reach. Childproof safety locks for cabinets can be helpful. Use child-resistant packaging as it can help save a baby's life. Keep the number of the poison control center near your phone so you can call for emergency first-aid advice.

### Electrocution

Electrical outlets, appliances, and cords can be baby safety hazards. Be sure to cover unused electrical outlets with safety caps and replace broken or missing receptacle cover plates. Small appliances, including blow dryers and irons, should be unplugged when not in use and kept out of a baby's reach.

### Suffocation and Strangulation

Plastic wrap and plastic dry cleaning, shopping, and garbage bags are every day items that are dangerous for a baby. They should be kept away from a baby at all times.

Never use plastic shipping bags or other plastic film as mattress covers. And a baby should never be allowed to lie or sleep face down on, or next to, pillows, cushions, comforters, or adult waterbeds.

ALWAYS pull drape or blind cords and decorative wall hangings with strings out of baby's reach. Be aware of this especially in the nursery when choosing the location for baby's crib.

Strings can cause strangulation! Never place items with strings around a child's neck such as hood strings or pacifier cords.

### Helpful Reminders

Selecting JPMA Certified Products is a good first step toward raising a happy, healthy baby. But, it is also very important you use these and all juvenile products correctly every time. Juvenile products are only to be used for the purpose intended by the manufacturer. Most juvenile products do have a long life, but they should be safety-checked frequently. Always remember juvenile products are not a substitute for parental supervision. Never leave a baby unattended!

For more information about the Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association (JPMA) please visit the Web site at [www.jpma.org](http://www.jpma.org) or contact JPMA at [jpma@ahint.com](mailto:jpma@ahint.com).



# *Safe & Sound* for baby

A downloadable version of this booklet can be found at [www.jpma.org](http://www.jpma.org)  
or for additional copies, please send a stamped, self-addressed business  
size envelope to:

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