



Policy Statement

The IAFC Seeks to Reinstate the 1972 Flame-Resistant Standard for Children's Sleepwear

The IAFC opposes the decisions of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) that eliminated this vital safety measure for children. The IAFC stands supportive of the Children's Sleepwear Safety Act (S. 2208/H.R. 730) and urges other fire service organizations to join in opposing the CPSC's actions regarding sleepwear for children.

In 1996, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) voted 2-1 to lower a long-established standard and permit the use of flammable material, such as cotton, on older children's sleepwear as long as the garments were "snug-fitting" and presumable more difficult to ignite. The safety standard was dropped completely for sleepwear for children younger than nine months.

The decision overturned a 1972 requirement that all children's pajamas, nightgowns and other sleepwear be made of flame-resistant material. The National Fire protection Association (NFPA) estimates that there would have been ten times as many deaths and substantially more injuries associated with children's sleepwear if the original 1972 standard had not been implemented.

Since the CPSC lowered the safety standard for children's pajamas, the Shriners Hospitals for Children, which treats over 20 percent of all major pediatric injuries in the United States, has experienced a significant increase in sleepwear-related burn injuries. Since 1997, Shriners burn hospitals in Boston, Cincinnati, Galveston and Sacramento have treated 65 children for flame injuries involving sleepwear. Of this total 14 were infants under 10 months old.

The Shriners burn hospitals constitute only four of the 135 burn centers within the United States. Therefore, the actual incidents of sleepwear-related injuries may be far more dramatic.

Legislation has recently been introduced to revoke the 1996 changes to the sleepwear standard. The Children's Sleepwear Safety Act (S. 2208/H.R. 730) returns the standard back to the 1972 criteria requiring **all** children's pajamas, nightgowns and other sleepwear to be made of flame-resistant material.

Amongst others, the following organizations have taken positions to support the legislation:

- National Fire Protection Association
- National Volunteer Fire Council
- Shriners Hospitals
- American Burn Association

Category: Governance/Leadership

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