



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Popular toys contain toxics and other hazards** **NYPIRG's *Trouble in Toyland* survey finds dangerous toys on shelves during holiday shopping season**

**New York** -- This holiday season, watch out for dangerous and toxic toys. NYPIRG's 33rd annual *Trouble in Toyland* report found toxic amounts of boron in slime products and a failure by Amazon to appropriately label choking hazards. Boron can cause nausea, vomiting and other health issues.

"No one should worry about whether or not the toy they're buying is toxic or dangerous. But in 2018, we're still finding hazards in some of the most popular toys. Toy manufacturers must do better to ensure their products are safe before they end up in children's hands and mouths," said Megan Ahearn, NYPIRG Program Director.

For more than 30 years, *Trouble in Toyland* has issued toy safety guidelines and has provided examples of toys currently on store shelves that pose potential safety hazards to small children. Key findings from this year's report include:

- **Hazardous Slime:** A number of popular 'slimes' had toxic levels of boron, likely in the form of borax, up to fifteen times the European Union's limit. [According to the EPA](#), ingesting boron can cause nausea, vomiting, long-term reproductive health issues and can even be fatal. There are currently no limits on boron in children's toys in the U.S.
- **Missing Online Choking Warnings:** In a survey of five search pages for balloons sold on Amazon, U.S. PIRG found no choking hazard labels on 87 percent of the latex balloons marketed to parents of children under 2, an apparent violation of the law. Among children's products, balloons are the [leading cause](#) of suffocation death.
- **Privacy-Invasive Smart Toys:** The report also highlights two smart toys, a robot toy and a tablet, with privacy concerns discovered through an investigation by the Mozilla Foundation. Every year, the potential for smart toys to expose private data becomes a more significant concern.

While there are currently no limits on boron in children's toys in the U.S., the advocacy organization is calling for warning labels to be placed on products and a full public hearing to determine safe levels of boron.

“Regulators need to determine the appropriate health-based standards to protect children from boron in slime. In the meantime, we want parents to know the risks, so they can supervise their kids accordingly,” said Tano Toussaint, Consumer Watchdog Associate at U.S. PIRG.

“I should be able to trust that the toys I buy my child are safe. However, until that’s the case, I’m glad that this report helps me watch out for common hazards in children’s toys,” said Rafaella Smith, a student parent from CUNY City College, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of the City College NAACP chapter, and USG Senator at Large.

View our full *Trouble in Toyland* report at [www.nypirg.org](http://www.nypirg.org). Parents can find our list of unsafe toys, as well as tips for safe toy shopping this holiday season, at [toysafetytips.org](http://toysafetytips.org).

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