

Prevent Holiday Tragedies with Safe Toys and Celebrations

In the 1983 movie "A Christmas Story", Ralphie sets out to convince the world that a Red Ryder BB gun is the perfect gift.

"You'll shoot your eye out!" was the response he got from his parents, teacher and even Santa Claus. It's one of the more hilarious and memorable quotes from this Christmas classic because we've all heard it repeatedly during our childhood. And unfortunately, it comes true for too many people.

It's hard to resist giving into your child's overwhelming desire for his or her most wished for gift, especially during the holiday season, but sometimes you have to for their safety.

Toys - including some seemingly innocent ones - and sporting equipment are responsible for thousands of eye injuries to children every year. That's why Eye M.D.s all over the country are promoting Safe Toys and Celebrations during the month of December and urging Americans to purchase safe toys and gifts this holiday season and all year long..

Every year ophthalmologists see the devastating injuries that seemingly safe toys can cause. By getting the word out, eye M.D.'s hope to save your child from needless suffering.

When shopping for toys, check labels to make sure they are age and maturity level appropriate, pass on games or toys with sharp or protruding parts or projectiles and consider carefully before giving darts, pellet guns or other firearms. These items are not appropriate for most children.

If you're giving sporting equipment, consider including appropriate protective eyewear. Approximately 40,000 sports-related eye injuries occur every year, but 90 percent of these injuries could be avoided with the right protective eyewear.

Lastly, before you open a bottle of your favorite bubbly to toast the holidays, learn how to do it safely. Make sure corks are covered by a towel and are pointed away from you and others, as well as making sure the champagne is chilled to at least 45 degrees Fahrenheit before opening. Every year, warm bottles of champagne, coupled with bad cork-removal technique are responsible for causing serious, blinding injuries.

By following a few simple safety tips, you can make sure your holidays are festive and injury free. Happy Holidays!

Eye health care is provided by the three "O's" - opticians, optometrists and ophthalmologists. It is the ophthalmologist, or Eye M.D., who can treat it all - eye diseases and injuries, and perform eye surgery.