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from Judee,  
Our Parish Nurse

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**TOY SAFETY A MAJOR CAUSE FOR CONCERN FOR PARENTS  
AND GIFT-GIVERS THIS YEAR**

***National Non-Profit Group Provides Toy Safety Tips to Help Protect Children***

**CHICAGO (Nov. 27, 2007)** – With the recent focus on toy safety and the holiday shopping season already in full swing, parents need to be aware of what they can do to make sure the gifts their children receive this year will not require a trip to the emergency room. Beyond poisoning from lead paint, some toys pose other dangers to children, including choking hazards and permanent vision loss.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimated that 202,300 children were treated in the emergency room for toy-related injuries in 2005, the most recent data available. And, 7,820 of those injuries were to the eyes. Eye injuries consisted of lacerations, abrasions and foreign bodies.

Prevent Blindness America has designated December as Safe Toys and Gifts Month in an effort to provide safety tips to all those buying gifts for children this year. Toys, sporting equipment and even art supplies can be harmful to kids if they are not used properly.

"We all want to make sure our children have the best holiday ever and receive whatever gift they are wishing for. But, unfortunately, the toy that is on top of their wish list may not be the most appropriate for their age and development level," said Daniel D. Garrett, senior vice president of Prevent Blindness America. "We all need to make an effort to take every safety precaution to protect our kids."

The group suggests the following tips to help make this holiday season a safe one for children:

- Inspect all toys before purchasing. Monitor toys that your child has received as gifts to make sure they are appropriate for your child's age and development level.
- Gifts of sports equipment should always be accompanied by protective gear (such as a basketball along with eye goggles). The American Academy of Ophthalmology estimates that there are 40,000 sports-related eye injuries each year.

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