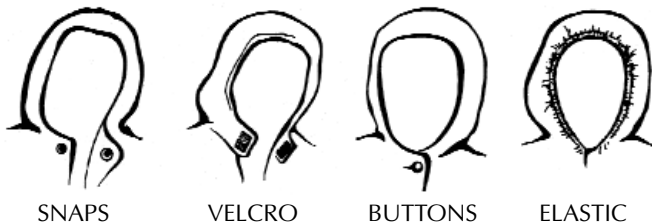


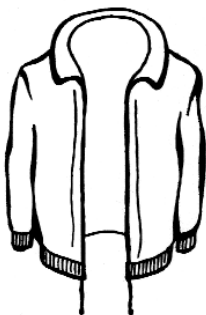
Recommended Guidelines

for Hood/Neck Drawstrings

CPSC recommends that parents or caregivers completely remove the hood and neck drawstrings from all children's upper outerwear, including jackets and sweatshirts, sized 2T to 12. CPSC technical staff has concluded that drawstrings at the neck that are shortened still may present a strangulation hazard. Therefore, CPSC recommends that consumers purchase children's upper outerwear that has alternative closures, such as snaps, buttons, Velcro, and elastic. CPSC also recommends that manufacturers and retailers provide upper outerwear with these alternative closures, rather than drawstrings at the head and neck area.



for Waist/Bottom Drawstrings



For upper outerwear sized 2T to 16, CPSC recommends to consumers, manufacturers, and retailers that the ends of waist/bottom drawstrings measure no more than 3 inches from where the strings extend out of the garment when it is expanded to its fullest width. Also, the drawstring should be sewn to the garment at its midpoint so the string can not be pulled to one side, making it long enough to catch on something. CPSC also recommends eliminating toggles or knots at the ends of all drawstrings. Shortening the length of drawstrings to 3 inches at the waist and bottom of children's upper outerwear reduces the risk that the strings will become entangled in objects such as school bus doors or other moving objects.

Waist/Bottom drawstrings of upper outerwear should measure no more than 3 inches from where strings extend out of the garment.

Guidelines for Drawstrings on Children's Upper Outerwear

Introduction

In February 1996, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) issued these guidelines to help prevent children from strangling or getting entangled on the neck and waist drawstrings of upper outerwear garments, such as jackets and sweatshirts. Drawstrings on children's clothing are a hidden hazard that can lead to deaths and injuries when they catch on such items as playground equipment, bus doors, or cribs. From January 1985 through January 1999, CPSC received reports of 22 deaths and 48 non-fatal incidents involving the entanglement of children's clothing drawstrings.

In June 1997, ASTM adopted a voluntary standard that incorporated CPSC's guidelines. You can obtain a copy of ASTM F1816-97, Standard Safety Specification for Drawstrings on Children's Upper Outerwear, by calling ASTM at (610) 832-9585.

These guidelines and the voluntary standard provide consumers with information to prevent hazards with garments now in their possession and make informed purchasing choices in the future. Manufacturers and retailers should also be aware of the hazards, and should be sure garments they manufacture and sell conform to the voluntary standard.

CPSC's drawstring guidelines do not represent a standard or mandatory requirement set by the agency. And, while CPSC does not sanction them as the only method of minimizing drawstring injuries, CPSC believes that these guidelines will help prevent children from strangling by their clothing drawstrings.

Deaths and Injuries

Hood/Neck Drawstrings

Over two-thirds of the deaths and non-fatal incidents involved hood/neck drawstrings on upper outerwear. The majority of these cases involved playground slides. Typically, as the child descended the slide, the toggle or knot on the drawstring got caught in a small space or gap at the top of the slide. Examples of catch points include a protruding bolt or a tiny space between the guardrail and the slide platform. As the child hung by the drawstring, suspended part way down the slide, the drawstring pulled the garment taut around the neck, strangling the child. Victims of these cases ranged in age from 2 through 8 years old.

In one case, a 5-year-old girl strangled after the drawstring on her jacket hood caught on the slide at her school.

One incident involved a fence. A 4-year-old girl strangled after the hood drawstring on her coat became entangled on a fence as she attempted to climb over it.

Two strangulations occurred in cribs. In one case, an 18-month-old child was found hanging from a corner post of his crib by the tied cord of the hooded sweatshirt he was wearing. Another little girl was hanged by the drawstring of her sweatshirt in her crib the first time she wore the sweatshirt.



Hood and neck drawstrings can become entangled on playground equipment, cribs, and other common items.

Waist/Bottom Drawstrings

Almost one-third of the deaths and non-fatal incidents involved drawstrings at the waist/bottom of children's jackets and sweatshirts. Most of these involved children whose waist or bottom strings of their jackets caught on school bus hand-rails or in school bus doors. In most cases, the drawstring at the bottom of the jacket snagged in a small space in the hand rail as the child was getting off the bus. Without the child or bus driver realizing that the drawstring was caught on the handrail, the bus doors closed and the bus drove away, dragging the child. Deaths occurred when children were run over by the bus. Victims of these school bus cases ranged in age from 7 through 14 years old.

A 14-year-old boy was killed when the long, trailing drawstring on his jacket got caught in the closed door of a moving school bus and he was eventually pulled beneath the bus and run over.



Waist drawstrings can become entangled in a bus door.