

**Doernbecher Children's
Hospital**

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Dear Chair Riley, Vice-Chair Hansell, and members of the committee,

My name is Kate Ballard. I am a registered nurse at OHSU Doernbecher Children's Hospital, as well as a pediatric nurse practitioner student at the OHSU School of Nursing. I support HB 3379.

One of the most dangerous misconceptions a new parent can have is that infants need a soft, cozy crib.¹ Healthcare professionals teach that "bare is best," but well-meaning parents see bumper pads in advertisements and stores, which sends the message that they must pad the crib to protect their baby.² This contradicts scientific evidence.^{3,4,5} Bumper pads are nothing more than a deadly crib decoration, providing no meaningful safety benefit. From 1990 to 2016, they were associated with 107 fatalities and 282 injuries – and these death rates are increasing with time.^{6,7} The American Academy of Pediatrics, National Institutes of Health, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warn against the use of bumper pads.^{8,9,10} Maryland, New York, Ohio, and Chicago have banned these products.^{11,12}

There are four types of death associated with bumper pads:^{13,14}

1. Infant's face against the bumper.



Figure 1: Death scene reconstruction with a mannequin.¹⁵

2. Infant wedged between the bumper and another object.

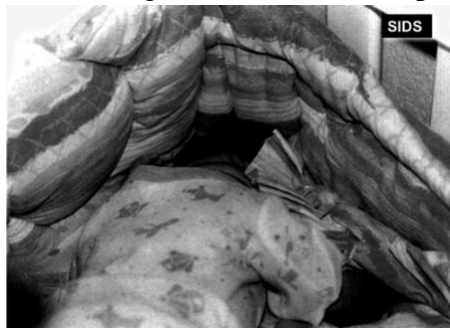


Figure 2: Death scene reconstruction with a mannequin.¹⁶

3. Bumper tie wrapped around the infant's neck.

4. Bumper used to climb out of the crib.

These events result in the infant re-breathing expired air, compression of their nose and mouth, or strangulation, which all cause death from asphyxiation.¹⁷

Parents feel a false sense of security when purchasing these products, and often assume that if an item were truly dangerous, it would be taken off the shelves.¹⁸ Unfortunately, there are no federal regulations for crib bumpers.¹⁹ There are **voluntary** industry standards, but it is unknown how many manufacturers actually comply.^{20,21} In addition, studies show that the voluntary thickness and labelling guidelines are not effective in preventing deaths.^{22,23}

Bumper pads are marketed as safety products that prevent infants from bumping against or getting limbs stuck in the crib. In reality, there is no evidence that bumpers provide these purported benefits. There are multiple documented cases of infants getting their legs stuck above or below the bumper.²⁴ In addition, 88% of limb entrapments involve children eight months or older.^{25,26} According to the voluntary industry standards, bumper pads should be removed around six months of age, before most of these entrapments would occur.^{27,28} Furthermore, injuries from bumps and limb entrapments in cribs are minor.²⁹ It would be impossible for the infant to create enough force to cause a serious injury. A Consumer Product Safety Commission statement dated November 3, 2016 reports, “There is a clear risk of injury or death associated with padded crib bumpers. Accordingly, we strongly warn all parents and caregivers not to use [these products]. Some caregivers may think that padded bumpers assist in protecting against head injury or limb entrapment. We strongly believe that the risk of death from padded crib bumpers far outweighs any purported benefits.”³⁰

The bottom line is that there is a dangerous good on the market meant for a very vulnerable population. Pediatric providers and nurses do all that we can to protect our patients, but education can only go so far. We need your help to protect infants from bumper pads by removing them from the market in Oregon. I urge you to vote yes on HB 3379. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Kate Ballard, BSN, RN

- ¹ Midgett, J. (2016). *Cluttered cribs and infant safety: Policy implications of selling and using padded crib bumpers and messaging about safe sleep environments for babies*. Report prepared for the US Consumer Product Safety Commission, Bethesda, MD.
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- ⁴ Thach, B., Rutherford, G., Harris, K. (2007). Deaths and injuries attributed to infant crib bumper pads. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 151(3), 271-274. Doi: 10.1016/j.peds.2007.04.028
- ⁵ Scheers, N., Woodard, D. & Thach, B. (2016). Crib bumpers continue to cause infant deaths: A need for a new preventive approach. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 169, 93-97. Doi: 10.1016/j.peds.2015.10.050
- ⁶ Midgett, J. (2016). *Cluttered cribs and infant safety: Policy implications of selling and using padded crib bumpers and messaging about safe sleep environments for babies*. Report prepared for the US Consumer Product Safety Commission, Bethesda, MD.
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- ⁸ American Academy of Pediatrics. (n.d.). *Safe sleep: Recommendations*. Retrieved from <https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/safe-sleep/Pages/Safe-Sleep-Recommendations.aspx>
- ⁹ National Institutes of Health. (n.d.). Frequently asked questions about SIDS and safe infant sleep. Retrieved from <https://safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov/safesleepbasics/faq>
- ¹⁰ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). Helping babies sleep safely. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/features/baby-safe-sleep/index.html>
- ¹¹ US Consumer Product Safety Commission. (April 3, 2020). Safety standard for crib bumpers/liners [Proposed rule]. 85 FR 18878, pg. 18878-18901.
- ¹² Press Office of Governor Andrew Cuomo. (2019). Governor Cuomo signs legislation expanding infant safety measures [Press release]. Retrieved from <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-signs-legislation-expanding-infant-safety-measures#:~:text=This%20law%20prohibits%20the%20sale,60%20days%20after%20becoming%20law>
- ¹³ Thach, B., Rutherford, G., Harris, K. (2007). Deaths and injuries attributed to infant crib bumper pads. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 151(3), 271-274. Doi: 10.1016/j.peds.2007.04.028
- ¹⁴ Scheers, N., Woodard, D. & Thach, B. (2016). Crib bumpers continue to cause infant deaths: A need for a new preventive approach. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 169, 93-97. Doi: 10.1016/j.peds.2015.10.050
- ¹⁵ Thach, B., Rutherford, G., Harris, K. (2007). Deaths and injuries attributed to infant crib bumper pads. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 151(3), 271-274. Doi: 10.1016/j.peds.2007.04.028
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- ²² Scheers, N., Woodard, D. & Thach, B. (2016). Crib bumpers continue to cause infant deaths: A need for a new preventive approach. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 169, 93-97. Doi: 10.1016/j.peds.2015.10.050
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- ²⁴ Scheers, N., Woodard, D. & Thach, B. (2016). Crib bumpers continue to cause infant deaths: A need for a new preventive approach. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 169, 93-97. Doi: 10.1016/j.peds.2015.10.050
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- ³⁰ US Consumer Product Safety Commission. (November 3, 2016). *Joint statement of Chairman Elliot F. Kaye, Commissioner Robert S. Adler, Commissioner Marietta S. Robinson and Commissioner Joseph P. Mohorovic recommending parents and caregivers not use padded crib bumpers*. Bethesda, MD. Retrieved from https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/Joint%20Statement%20on%20Padded%20Crib%20Bumpers%20FINAL%2011.3.16_0.pdf