



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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DATE: December 14, 2014

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

*Recipe Attached*



## **Eyes on Toy Safety This Holiday Season**

*(Honolulu, Hawaii), December 14, 2014* – With the holidays in full swing, parents are dodging in and out of stores trying to find the perfect gift for their keiki. But it's not all fun and games. The Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that nearly 190,000 children 14 and younger went to the emergency room for toy-related injuries in 2013. The American Academy of Ophthalmology has designated December "Safe Toys and Celebrations Month" so parents don't forget to keep both safety and fun in mind when they pick toys for their children.

"The eyes are especially vulnerable to toy injuries because the tissue in that area is very delicate and sensitive to any type of force," said Dr. Christopher Tortora, M.D., medical director of the Hawaiian Eye Center and Dry Eye Clinic. "Children tend to be a little careless, so it's important for parents to find toys that help limit the chance of serious eye damage."

Toys can cause eye injuries ranging from minor to severe, including:

- Scratches to the eye's surface (corneal abrasions)
- Open sores typically from infections (corneal ulcers)
- Bleeding inside the eye
- Clouding of the eye's lens (traumatic cataracts)
- Tearing or detachment of the retina—light-sensitive tissue at back of the eye

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Most toy packaging in the U.S. will indicate suggested age ranges. Parents should use the label and their own personal judgment to purchase a toy that meets the age and developmental level of their child. Toys are not one-size-fits-all, and parents should make a conscious decision on what toy will be safe and fun for their keiki.

Some suggestions for age-appropriate toys that help stimulate visual development, develop hand-eye coordination and teach spatial relationships include:

- Birth to 12 months: brightly colored mobiles, rattles, balls, stuffed animals, activity gyms and blocks.
- 1-year-olds: Stuffed animals, blocks, puzzles, finger paints, modeling clay, stacking/nesting toys and musical toys.
- 2-year-olds: stuffed animals, blocks, puzzles, finger paints, modeling clay, stacking/nesting toys, musical toys, dress-up clothes, child-size household items, sandbox, kiddie pool, backyard gym/climbing toys, toy typewriter and cash register.
- 3- to 6-year-olds: large crayons, markers, toy computer or computer games, board games, roller skates, toy camera, stuffed animals, blocks, puzzles, finger paints, modeling clay, stacking/nesting toys, musical toys and dress-up clothes.
- 7- to 12-year-olds: science items (microscope, telescope, chemistry set, etc.), books, bicycle, musical instruments, skateboard, jump rope, electric train, sports equipment, video games, computer games and board games.

*Dr. Christopher Tortora, a board certified ophthalmologist, is host of "The Hawaiian Eye Show," a weekly informational radio program about healthy vision broadcast live every Saturday at 8 a.m. on KHVH 830 AM/rebroadcast at 9 p.m. on KHBZ 990 AM. He and his colleagues at the Hawaiian Eye Center are committed to educating the public about the importance of preventative eye care. To learn more about a variety of eye health issues, please call the Hawaiian Eye Center at 621-8448 or visit [www.HawaiianEye.com](http://www.HawaiianEye.com) and [www.Facebook.com/HawaiianEyeCenter](http://www.Facebook.com/HawaiianEyeCenter), where "life has never looked better."*

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