



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DECEMBER 2010**

**For Further Information, Contact:
David Bobka, WOA Director of Communications
Email: davidwoaoffice@tds.net
Phone: 608.824.2200**

CHECK YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING LIST FOR SAFETY

The Wisconsin Optometric Association urges parents to make smart choices to avoid eye injuries

Of the 3 billion toys and games sold in the United States each year, 65 percent of sales occur during the holiday season. While toys and games are a great way to challenge a child's eyesight and sharpen their visual acuity, certain toys pose serious dangers to children's vision.

As the holiday season approaches, the [Wisconsin Optometric Association \(WOA\)](#) joins organizations across the country in recognizing December as *Safe Toys and Gifts Month*. At this time, Wisconsin doctors of optometry would like to remind parents that some toys can cause serious eye injuries and urge them to be vigilant of their child's toys.

"It comes down to common sense," Dr. Marcus Neitzke, WOA President and optometrist, says. "Be proactive and watch for dangerous toys that could injure your children."

The [U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission](#) identifies toy weapons as the largest contributor to eye-related accidents and injuries. Toys such as guns, knives and slingshots, and other sharp-edged objects, have the potential to cause serious injury.

Dr. Neitzke offers these tips for finding safe toys and monitoring playtime:

Only buy toys appropriate for your child's age. You can find recommended ages on a toy's packaging.

Read all warnings and instructions on the box, and show your child how to use a toy safely before playtime.

Avoid purchasing toys with sharp or rigid points, spikes, rods, or dangerous edges, as well as toys that shoot or include parts that fly off. Remember that BB guns are NOT toys.

Discard broken or damaged toys that cannot be repaired. Sharp edges can cause serious eye injury, especially if thrown.

Buy toys that will withstand impact and not break into dangerous shards that could cause serious eye injury.

Be aware of toy safety recalls on TV, in stores and in the newspaper. If a toy is recalled for any reason, return it to the store immediately. For further information, visit the U.S. Product Safety Commission Web site: www.cpsc.go.

There are many safe toys on the market today that will not only enhance your child's creativity and personality, but will allow them to fun AND stay safe. If you have any questions, please contact the Wisconsin Optometric Association at 1-800-678-5357 or visit www.woa-eyes.org.

###

About the Wisconsin Optometric Association

The Wisconsin Optometric Association (WOA) is a nonprofit affiliation of licensed doctors of optometry and associated businesses dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of the vision welfare of the people of Wisconsin. The WOA accomplishes its goals through: education and dissemination of information, organized governmental activity, legislation and regulation, mediation with consumer and public interest groups, and provision of collective benefits to its members. Approximately 650 doctors of optometry are currently members of the WOA located in nearly every county in the state. All members must be licensed to practice optometry by the State of Wisconsin. For more information, visit WOA's Web site at www.woa-eyes.org.