

FREE

“Made in China” on toy shoppers holiday hit list

Recalled toys make
parents extra careful

BY PETE SKIBA
Florida Weekly Correspondent

In the mad rush of the holiday season, starting with Black Friday, parents and relatives continue to check toy labels for “Made in China.”

Recently toys made in China have been recalled for containing lead paint, magnetic parts and GHB, the date rape drug, of all things.

“I look for little parts, anything that might come off and choke a child when I buy a toy for my grandchildren,” said Fort Myers resident Margaret Hulvy. “I used to work for Fisher-Price toys and ever since they closed the factory and sent manufacturing out of the country quality control went down to zero.”

Other parents in the area keep up with toy recalls and warnings through newspapers, television programs and the internet.

“I pay attention to all the toy news on television like on the “Today” show,” said North Fort Myers Amanda Early, mother of 3-year-old twins. “I also go to Web sites on the computer. I’m careful about the toys my children get.”

To others, it seems like all they have to do is see the “Made in China” sticker to drop the toy from their list.

“Absolutely I read the label on the toys and if it says ‘Made in China’ a red flag goes up,” said John Pedone, 40, a Naples father of two children under 5 years old.

“I see it made in China and it raises an issue with me. Usually I pass on it, whether they want it or not.”

Government regulators flagged Aqua Dots, a Chinese-made bead toy ordered made by Australia-headquartered company Moose Enterprises, off the market because it contained gamma-hydroxybutyric acid. Commonly called GHB, the date-rape drug, the substance if swallowed could lead to unconsciousness, a coma or death.

SEE TOYS, A10 ▶



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Top 10 worst
toys that could
be dangerous to
your children.
A10

mental health care in crisis

BY CARL-JOHN X VERAJA
Florida Weekly Correspondent

State funding for mental health in Lee County hasn’t increased in nearly six years while the population has grown by double digits.

The meager resources available are so stretched that county residents with mental illnesses are placed in non-psychiatric hospital beds (at a cost of about \$2 million annually), sent to jail or are left homeless.

“Our largest mental hospital is the Lee County Jail,” said Lee County Commissioner Bob Janes. “400 people in that jail shouldn’t be there because they have mental health problems. They should be in treatment.”

Kevin Lewis, executive director of Southwest Florida Addiction Services, agreed with Janes.

“We put 30 or more people a month in jail in protective custody,” Lewis said. “Those are people who didn’t break the law but because they are intoxicated they are housed overnight in jail.”

SEE CRISIS, A8 ▶

“Our largest mental hospital is the Lee County Jail,”
— Lee County Commissioner Bob Janes



Iridescent art

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