

Toxic toys on bad trip off store shelves

Bindeez have been found to contain 'ecstasy' and have been recalled; but about 3,000 had already been sold.

By [Sashni Pather](#) ^{30 Nov 2007}

A local distributor of a toxic toy, containing a substance that transforms into liquid ecstasy if ingested, has reassured parents that the contaminated products have been removed from shelves.

Just Fun Toys has recalled the Bindeez products that are featured in its Christmas catalogue.

The Bindeez toys — named Australia's 2007 toy of the year — contains a potentially dangerous chemical, 1,4-butanediol, which, when ingested, can metabolise into liquid ecstasy.

Three Australian children suffered seizures and needed intensive hospital care after putting the plastic beads in their mouths.

Just Fun Toys managing director Stephen Hurst said even though the products were still in the catalogue, retailers have pulled the toys off their shelves, although thousands had already been sold.

“An estimated 30 000 toys across the Bindeez range were supplied to retailers nationally. Around 3 000 toys were purchased by customers. Those with the toys are urged to bring them back to the stores for a full refund.”

Major manufacturers proactive

He emphasised that major retailers had taken their stock of Bindeez off the shelves.

“We don't expect any incidents like the ones in Australia as we caught the recall just in time. Another thing to bear in mind is that the bigger manufacturers voluntarily recall products that are defective. It is the smaller, lesser known manufacturers that we should worry about.”

Hurst explained that the Christmas catalogue was printed before the recall. He said 800 000 copies of the catalogue had been printed and would be distributed over the festive season.

Recently, some Mattel toys were found to have high levels of lead in them, leading to a recall of all 17 000 toys locally.

High levels of lead can lead to a reduction in IQ scores, hearing loss, and behavioural problems such as aggression and violence.

Soon after this scare, Mattel also recalled the plush Barney toy from the shelves as it was found to contain excessive lead.

Australian officials introduced a nationwide ban on Bindeez and it was also pulled from shelves in the US.

Source: *Sunday Times*

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