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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: November 24, 2014

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HOLIDAY GIFT-BUYING SEASON IS HERE

What You Need to Know When Selecting Children's Toys

BREWSTER, NY—It's that time of year again when adults everywhere are starting to shop for children's holiday gifts. Toy safety is important when making selections and MaryEllen Odell encourages shoppers to heed the guidance offered by Putnam County's Child Advocacy Center (CAC) and the Putnam County Department of Health (PCDOH).

“Even one child treated for a toy-related injury is too many,” says County Executive Odell. “We need to be aware and protective of our youngest and most vulnerable residents.”

According to a new report by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), there were approximately 188,400 children treated in emergency departments for toy-related injuries last year. This represents a decrease of 2% from the previous year. Marla Behler, CAC Program Coordinator said, “The fact that the numbers are going down is good news. This means that we are doing a better job at increasing awareness and knowledge. But we must continue to stay vigilant and focused on these tasks until these preventable injuries stop.”

Allen Beals, MD, Commissioner of Health, points out that lead remains a problem despite legislation that bans its use in toys. “While the United States has banned lead in items marketed to children, significant numbers of imported items for children still contain it, including toys and children's jewelry,” Dr. Beals explains.

Other problematic toys include those with small parts which can result in choking, or toys with projectiles that can cause eye injury. Overly loud toys may damage hearing, and there are growing lists of items with small, high-powered magnets (neodymium) that can cause severe gastrointestinal injuries, even death if swallowed.

The age appropriateness of a toy should always be considered. Even if a child is advanced for his or her age that does not mean it is safe for the child to play with a toy made for an older level. Safety recommendations are developed based on safety issues alone, not maturity or intelligence. More information is available at <http://kidshealth.org>. Click on “For Parents,” and search for “toy safety.”

The CAC’s goal is to keep children safe, which includes reducing serious injuries and deaths. For more information please visit <http://www.putnamcountyny.com> and under “Departments” select Child Advocacy Center, or visit our social media site on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/putnamcac> and Twitter [@PutnamCAC](https://twitter.com/PutnamCAC).

The Health Department’s mission is to protect and improve the health of the county’s nearly 100,000 residents. For more information, please visit www.putnamcountyny.com or social media sites on Facebook at www.facebook.com/putnamhealth and Twitter [@PutnamHealthNY](https://twitter.com/PutnamHealthNY).

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For further information:

U.S Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) @ <http://www.cpsc.gov/>