



Press Release

Window covering cords can KILL (#SafeWindowCovering)

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The OECD Global Awareness Campaign on Window Covering Cord Safety¹ runs from 23 to 30 June. ANEC joins OECD in wanting to ensure parents are aware of the risks that window blind cords can pose to young children.

Roller blinds, or other window blinds, are found in many homes. Sadly, children are at risk of injury - even strangulation - from the cords used to operate blinds. Even more regrettably, there have been cases of children dying after becoming entangled in cords.

In 2010, ANEC alerted the European Commission to the need for a strengthening of the European Standard, EN 13120². The Commission responded through issuing a Decision³ and mandate⁴ to CEN⁵ to address risks posed to children by internal blinds and corded window coverings.

¹ <http://www.oecd.org/sti/consumer/Window-Covering-Cord-Safety-Campaign.htm>

² EN 13120 "Internal blinds. Performance requirements including safety"

³ Commission Decision 2011/477/EU, OJ L 196, 28.7.2011, p. 21. See <http://goo.gl/5GU3ab>

⁴ Mandate M/505. See <http://goo.gl/CCp84f>

⁵ CEN, the European Committee for Standardisation

The work, in which ANEC was a key participant, led to the adoption of 3 European Standards⁶ that introduced requirements for safety devices to stop cords or chains from forming a hazard; for the installation & testing of these devices; for warnings & instructions and the packaging and point-of-sale information.

Stephen Russell, ANEC Secretary-General, said, "ANEC was delighted to help CEN develop these standards in the public interest. Nevertheless, blinds already installed in homes continue to cause concern. We believe heightening public awareness is vital in countering the risk and hence we support the OECD #SafeWindowCovering campaign".

For blinds already installed, ANEC advises parents to keep cords out of the reach of children; to check that corded window coverings cannot form hazardous loops, and to ensure a cot, bed or playpen is not placed close to a window with corded blinds. Parents should also seek guidance from retailers about the use of safety accessories to reduce the risks from blind cords.

⁶ EN 13120/A1 "Internal blinds – Performance requirements including safety"; EN 16434 "Internal blinds - Protection from strangulation hazards – Requirements & test methods for safety devices"; EN 16433 "Internal blinds - Protection from strangulation hazards - Test methods"

About ANEC

ANEC is the European consumer voice in standardisation, defending consumer interests in the processes of technical standardisation and conformity assessment, as well as related legislation and public policies.

ANEC was established in 1995 as an international non-profit association under Belgian law and is open to the representation of national consumer organisations in 33 countries.

ANEC is funded by the European Union and EFTA, with national consumer organisations contributing in kind. Its Secretariat is based in Brussels.



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