



Press Release:

New standards for window blinds will offer more protection to children

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Contact Person: Tania Vandenberghe

+32 (0) 473 12 03 72

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ANEC welcomes today's publication of tougher European standards for window blinds as a move towards reducing accidents involving 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 the blinds. Even more regrettably, there have been several cases of children having died after becoming entangled in cords.

In 2010, ANEC alerted the European Commission to the need for a strengthening of the European Standard, EN 13120¹. The Commission responded through issuing a Decision² and mandate³ to CEN to address risks posed to children by internal blinds and corded window coverings.

¹ EN 13120 "Internal blinds. Performance requirements including safety"

² Commission Decision 2011/477/EU, OJ L 196, 28.7.2011, p. 21. See <http://goo.gl/5GU3ab>

³ Mandate M/505. See <http://goo.gl/CCp84f>

ANEC participated in the work of the CEN committee through contributions from its child safety experts. Our participation was especially welcomed given the lack of other child safety experts in the committee.

The work led to the adoption of 3 European Standards⁴ that introduce 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, commented: "We are delighted to have helped CEN develop these standards in the public interest. We trust the tougher safety requirements will lead to a decrease in accidents and fatalities".

Nevertheless, blinds already installed in homes continue to give concern. We believe raising public awareness is key in offsetting the risk.

"For blinds already installed, ANEC advises parents to keep cords out of the reach of children and to ensure a cot, bed or playpen is not placed close to a window with corded blinds. They should also seek guidance from retailers about the use of safety accessories to reduce the risks from blind cords", Mr Russell added.

ENDS

⁴ 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.



Raising standards for consumers

**European association for the coordination
of consumer representation in standardisation aisbl**

Avenue de Tervuren 32, box 27, B-1040 Brussels, Belgium

Tel.: +32 2 743 24 70 / Fax: +32 2 706 54 30

E-mail: anec@anec.eu

EC Register of Interest Representatives:

Identification number 507800799-30

www.anec.eu

<http://companies.to/anec/>



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