



Challenge To Parents: Nightlights and Lamps Are Not Toys

Parents and caregivers often turn to lamps and nightlights to help small children become accustomed to the dark. A number of such lamps and night lights manufactured and sold today with cartoon-like designs may have a toy-like appearance. As such, these lights are attractive to children, who may see them as toys. That's why the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) cautions parents and caregivers that such lights can pose safety hazards when not used properly. Portable lamps and nightlights are not toys and children should never be allowed to play with them. Playing with portable lamps or nightlights can cause not only property damage but injury, such as electric shock and burns, even death. ESFI offers these safety tips to help you avoid electrical accidents:

- Only adults and older children should operate electrical lamps and other electrical equipment. Small children should never be allowed to operate portable lamps or nightlights.
- Children should not plug in or unplug portable lamps or nightlights. Instead, remind children to ask an adult for help.
- Parents should check to make sure the proper wattage bulb is being used in lights.
- Handle nightlights carefully to ensure that the plug blades are correctly inserted into the receptacle. Use caution when handling nightlights and avoid twisting or using pressure, which can cause components to break and expose wiring, risking electrical shock and burns.

- Consumers should make sure the nightlights or lamps they purchase are certified by recognized independent testing labs such as UL, CSA, or ETL.

Teaching safe electrical principles early in life can help establish lifelong electrical safety habits and the consequences of unsafe behavior. For these and other safety tips and resources, including the "Mr. Plug Fun Book" with educational coloring and activities for children.

Visit the ESFI Website at www.electrical-safety.org for more information.