



# *Final Report*

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## *Product Safety Poll*

### *Appendix: Questionnaire*

**For Public  
Release**

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**Consumer Reports National Research Center**

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# Methodology

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- Telephone surveys were conducted among 1,007 random adults comprising 500 men and 507 women 18 years of age and older. Interviewing took place over January 27-30, 2011.
- The questionnaire was fielded via Opinion Research Corporation's Caravan twice-weekly national telephone omnibus survey. ORC used random digit dialing to achieve a nationally representative probability sample and weighted completed interviews by age, education, geographic region, race and sex.
- The results of this study are intended for external communications. Methodology statement for public release:

The Consumer Reports National Research Center conducted a telephone survey using a nationally representative probability sample of telephone households. 1,007 interviews were completed among adults aged 18+. Interviewing took place over January 27-30, 2011. The sampling error is +/- 3.2 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.



# Implications

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- This study was commissioned to investigate consumers' attitudes toward product safety.
- The vast majority of consumers (98%) *agreed strongly* or *somewhat* that the federal government should play a prominent role in improving product safety, and 91% *strongly agreed* (top box) with at least one of the five statements about this role. Details (pages 6-8):
  - ✓ Around 8 in 10 consumers *strongly agreed* that...
    - ⇒ The federal government should require testing by manufacturers of children's products like jewelry, pacifiers and toys to ensure they do not contain any harmful substances.
    - ⇒ The federal government should require testing by manufacturers of products like baby carriers or slings, cribs and strollers to ensure their safety.
  - ✓ More than 7 in 10 *strongly agreed* that...
    - ⇒ The federal government should take steps to keep unsafe consumer products out of the marketplace.
    - ⇒ The federal government should set safety standards for all children's products.
    - ⇒ The federal government should make consumer complaints about safety hazards with products available to the public.
  - ✓ Generally, those aged 18-34 years, women and consumers earning less than \$40,000 per year expressed the strongest support for a government role in improving product safety. Respondents living in the South or Northeast also reported stronger support than residents of other regions.



## Implications (cont.)

- Overwhelmingly, consumers feel that information about product safety issues should be readily accessible. More than 8 in 10 said they are *very* or *somewhat interested* in the ability to obtain information about safety hazards, and 4 in 10 reported being *very interested* (top box; pages 9-10).
  - ✓ Details of reported interest:
    - ⇒ The ability to find out if another consumer experienced a safety hazard with a consumer product. (87% *very* or *somewhat interested*/42% *very interested*)
    - ⇒ The ability to access a database maintained by the government where you can report and search safety problems with consumer products. (82%/42%)
  - ✓ Those with midrange household income (\$40,000-\$74,999), aged 35-54 years and women reported the most interest. Geographically, residents of the South expressed considerably more interest than others.
  
- The evolution of perceived safety varied by product category (pages 11-12).
  - ✓ When asked how their confidence in the safety of six consumer products has evolved over the past several years, cars fared best—half of respondents felt that the safety of cars has *increased*, versus 3 in 10 for other product categories.
    - ⇒ For most products, those earning \$40,000-\$74,999 and older consumers (aged 55+ years) perceived greater safety improvements.
  - ✓ Half of consumers said that the safety of appliances has *stayed the same*, and 4 in 10 felt that safety for building products (e.g., paint, flooring, drywall) has not changed in recent years.
    - ⇒ Generally, high-income (\$75,000+) consumers and those aged 18-34 years were most likely to see no change in safety.
  - ✓ Perceived safety declined the most for three product areas. One-third of respondents said that the safety of foods has *decreased* over the past several years, and one-quarter perceived lower safety for medicines or children's products.



## Implications (cont.)

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- **Consumer awareness of recalls ordered over the past several years is high. Overall, 8 in 10 respondents said they knew about recent recalls or cribs or toys (page 13).**
- **Most consumers (75%) also are aware of the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Reported awareness of the CPSC is highest among those aged 35+ years or earning at least \$40,000 per year. Young consumers and those with the lowest income had the least awareness (page 14).**



# Government's Product Safety Role

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- Consumers rated their agreement of five statements regarding the role that the federal government might play in improving product safety.
- Overall agreement was very high. Virtually all (98%) *strongly agreed* or *agreed* with at least one of the statements, and 91% *strongly agreed* with one or more.
- Roughly 8 in 10 consumers *strongly agreed* that the federal government should require manufacturers to test children's products:
  - ✓ The federal government should require testing by manufacturers of children's products like jewelry, pacifiers and toys to ensure they do not contain any harmful substances. (82%)
  - ✓ The federal government should require testing by manufacturers of products like baby carriers or slings, cribs and strollers to ensure their safety. (80%)
- More than 7 in 10 *strongly agreed* that:
  - ✓ The federal government should take steps to keep unsafe consumer products out of the marketplace.(73%)
  - ✓ The federal government should set safety standards for all children's products. (72%)
  - ✓ The federal government should make consumer complaints about safety hazards with products available to the public. (71%)
- Generally, those aged 18-34 years, women and consumers earning less than \$40,000 per year expressed the strongest support for a government role in improving product safety. Respondents living in the South or Northeast also reported stronger support than residents of other regions.

**INTRODUCTION:**

Following are several statements relating to product safety. For each, please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree.

**B1ALL - Strongly Agree = Agreement With Product Safety Statements  
[4 boxes: Strongly Agree...Strongly Disagree]**

	TOTAL	Gender		Age			Household Income			Region			
		Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	<\$40K	\$40-74K	\$75K+	NEast	Midwest	South	West
UNWEIGHTED BASE	1,007	500	507	114	305	574	321	250	261	189	229	362	227
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Strongly Agree (Net)</i>	<b>91</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>86</b>
The federal government should require testing by manufacturers of children's products like jewelry, pacifiers and toys to ensure they do not contain any harmful substances	82	77	87	89	82	77	85	83	80	85	75	88	78
The federal government should require testing by manufacturers of products like baby carriers or slings, cribs and strollers to ensure their safety	80	72	89	85	81	75	86	82	76	81	79	83	76
The federal government should take steps to keep unsafe consumer products out of the marketplace	73	65	80	77	72	70	74	72	70	77	68	78	66
The federal government should set safety standards for all children's products	72	64	80	81	69	66	80	69	65	72	68	76	70
The federal government should make consumer complaints about safety hazards with products available to the public	71	66	76	74	71	66	75	73	69	69	67	76	68

**INTRODUCTION:**

Following are several statements relating to product safety. For each, please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree.

**B1ALL - Strongly/Somewhat Agree = Agreement With Product Safety Statements  
[4 boxes: Strongly Agree...Strongly Disagree]**

	TOTAL	Gender		Age			Household Income			Region			
		Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	<\$40K	\$40-74K	\$75K+	NEast	Midwest	South	West
UNWEIGHTED BASE	1,007	500	507	114	305	574	321	250	261	189	229	362	227
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (Net)</i>	<b>98</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>99</b>
The federal government should require testing by manufacturers of children's products like jewelry, pacifiers and toys to ensure they do not contain any harmful substances	95	94	96	98	95	91	94	97	95	95	93	96	94
The federal government should require testing by manufacturers of products like baby carriers or slings, cribs and strollers to ensure their safety	94	90	97	93	96	91	96	96	92	89	94	95	95
The federal government should make consumer complaints about safety hazards with products available to the public	93	91	95	95	93	90	93	94	93	91	91	96	92
The federal government should take steps to keep unsafe consumer products out of the marketplace	93	91	94	96	92	90	93	93	93	92	90	94	94
The federal government should set safety standards for all children's products	91	89	93	96	91	86	94	91	89	88	92	92	92



# Product Safety Information

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- More than 8 in 10 consumers said they are *interested* (very or somewhat interested) in the ability to obtain information about safety hazards, and 4 in 10 reported being *very interested* (top box).
- Details (*interested/very interested*):
  - ✓ The ability to find out if another consumer experienced a safety hazard with a consumer product. (87%/42%)
  - ✓ The ability to access a database maintained by the government where you can report and search safety problems with consumer products. (82%/42%)
- Those with midrange household income (\$40,000-\$74,999), aged 35-54 years and women reported the most interest. Geographically, residents of the South expressed considerably more interest than others.

**INTRODUCTION:**

How interested are you in each of the following? Would you say very interested, somewhat interested, somewhat disinterested or very disinterested?

**B2ALL - Very Interested = Interest in Product Safety Information**  
**[4 boxes: Very Interested...Very Disinterested]**

	TOTAL	Gender		Age			Household Income			Region			
		Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	<\$40K	\$40-74K	\$75K+	NEast	Midwest	South	West
UNWEIGHTED BASE	1,007	500	507	114	305	574	321	250	261	189	229	362	227
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
The ability to access a database maintained by the government where you can report and search safety problems with consumer products	42	37	46	40	46	39	45	47	39	36	39	48	40
The ability to find out if another consumer experienced a safety hazard with a consumer product	42	37	46	38	47	39	42	45	42	44	36	48	34

**B2ALL - Very/Somewhat Interested = Interest in Product Safety Information**  
**[4 boxes: Very Interested...Very Disinterested]**

	TOTAL	Gender		Age			Household Income			Region			
		Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	<\$40K	\$40-74K	\$75K+	NEast	Midwest	South	West
UNWEIGHTED BASE	1,007	500	507	114	305	574	321	250	261	189	229	362	227
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
The ability to find out if another consumer experienced a safety hazard with a consumer product	87	85	88	94	86	80	88	85	87	87	82	89	87
The ability to access a database maintained by the government where you can report and search safety problems with consumer products	82	80	83	86	84	75	82	82	82	88	78	83	78



# Confidence in Product Safety

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- Consumers were asked how their confidence in the safety of six consumer products has evolved over the past several years, using a five-point scale: *increased strongly, increased somewhat, stayed the same, decreased somewhat or decreased strongly.*
- Perceived safety has improved the most for cars. Half of respondents felt that the safety of cars has *increased (increased strongly/somewhat)*, versus 3 in 10 for other product categories. For most products, those earning \$40,000-\$74,999 and older consumers (aged 55+ years) were more likely to report safety improvements.
- Half of consumers said that the safety of appliances has *stayed the same* (middle box), and 4 in 10 felt that safety for building products (e.g., paint, flooring, drywall) has not changed in recent years. Generally, high-income (\$75,000+) consumers and those aged 18-34 years were most likely to see no change in safety.
- Perceived safety declined the most for three product areas. One-third of respondents said that the safety of foods has *decreased (decreased strongly/somewhat)* over the past several years, and one-quarter perceived lower safety for medicines or children's products.

**B3ALL - Thinking about the past several years, would you say that your confidence in the safety of the following products has increased strongly, increased somewhat, stayed the same, decreased somewhat or decreased strongly? [5 boxes: Increased Strongly...Decreased Strongly]**

UNWEIGHTED BASE	TOTAL	Gender		Age			Household Income			Region			
	1,007	Men 500	Women 507	18-34 114	35-54 305	55+ 574	<\$40K 321	\$40-74K 250	\$75K+ 261	NEast 189	Midwest 229	South 362	West 227

**Increased Strongly/Somewhat**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Cars	50	50	49	53	47	49	47	57	46	53	45	50	51
Building products, like paint, flooring, drywall	37	39	36	36	36	39	39	47	28	38	38	39	34
Children's products	37	37	38	41	30	41	43	42	27	34	36	42	34
Medicines	35	37	33	32	31	41	36	42	27	38	33	35	34
Appliances	33	35	32	29	32	38	36	43	24	34	32	35	33
Foods	30	29	31	27	28	36	36	35	24	30	30	29	34

**Stayed the Same**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Appliances	50	50	49	59	50	42	46	44	64	46	47	48	58
Building products, like paint, flooring, drywall	43	42	43	51	42	37	40	41	56	39	45	38	51
Foods	36	40	33	43	35	32	35	33	42	37	37	33	41
Medicines	36	39	33	45	36	30	34	30	48	29	36	33	48
Children's products	33	37	30	38	35	29	30	31	44	34	36	27	40
Cars	30	31	29	32	31	28	33	22	44	26	31	26	37

**Decreased Somewhat/Strongly**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Foods	32	29	34	29	35	30	27	31	34	30	32	37	25
Medicines	27	22	31	23	30	27	28	27	24	28	30	30	17
Children's products	26	23	28	19	34	25	25	26	27	27	26	28	22
Cars	17	15	19	11	20	19	18	19	10	13	21	20	11
Building products, like paint, flooring, drywall	15	15	14	8	18	17	16	10	15	13	15	16	12
Appliances	14	12	16	9	17	17	16	12	11	13	18	16	9



# Awareness of Recalls

- Overall, 8 in 10 consumers said they are aware of recent recalls of cribs or toys.
- Awareness of both has highest among older respondents, those aged 55+ years.

B4ALL - Please tell me whether you are aware of the following.

	TOTAL	Gender		Age			Household Income			Region			
		Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	<\$40K	\$40-74K	\$75K+	NEast	Midwest	South	West
UNWEIGHTED BASE	1,007	500	507	114	305	574	321	250	261	189	229	362	227
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
The recalls during the past several years of cribs for design problems that presented safety hazards	81	78	83	76	80	88	80	85	80	81	82	85	71
The recalls in 2007 of toys that contained harmful substances	80	80	79	72	81	86	76	83	82	79	80	81	76
None of these	10	12	7	15	8	7	10	7	10	10	8	10	11
Don't know	1	0	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	2



# Awareness of CPSC

- Three-quarters of respondents said that they are aware of the Consumer Product Safety Commission.
- Consumers aged 35+ years or earning at least \$40,000 per year reported the highest awareness. Young consumers and those with the lowest income had the least awareness.

## B5 - Are you aware of the Consumer Product Safety Commission?

	Gender		Age			Household Income			Region				
	TOTAL	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	<\$40K	\$40-74K	\$75K+	NEast	Midwest	South	West
UNWEIGHTED BASE	1,007	500	507	114	305	574	321	250	261	189	229	362	227
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	75	75	75	51	89	84	66	82	85	79	75	76	69
No	24	23	24	49	10	15	33	18	15	19	21	24	29
Don't know	1	2	1	-	1	0	1	-	-	1	4	-	1



# Profile

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- **Men and women were about equally represented in the poll, and the median age of respondents was 46 years.**
- **Overall, 26% of participants reported having at least a four-year college degree, but 44% had no education beyond high school.**
- **Median household income of interviewed consumers was about \$46,000, and 34% said they are employed full time.**
- **Half of respondents (49%) said they are married, and three-quarters identified themselves as Caucasian.**

## Profile

	Gender		Age			Household Income			
	TOTAL	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	<\$40K	\$40-74K	\$75K+
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>UNWEIGHTED BASE</b>	<b>1,007</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>507</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>261</b>
<b><u>GENDER</u></b>									
Male	49	100	-	50	49	46	42	50	56
Female	51	-	100	50	51	54	58	50	44
<b><u>AGE</u></b>									
18-34	30	31	29	100	-	-	37	23	21
35-44	17	18	17	-	47	-	14	18	23
45-54	19	20	19	-	53	-	15	21	30
55-64	15	15	15	-	-	48	15	19	16
65+	17	15	18	-	-	52	19	18	10
Refused/Nr	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	0	0
MEDIAN (Years)	45.9	45.3	46.5	26.0	45.4	66.0	43.3	48.7	46.7
<b><u>EDUCATION</u></b>									
Some HS or less	13	14	13	18	12	11	24	6	2
HS graduate	31	32	30	31	29	34	40	29	22
Some college	28	24	32	33	26	27	24	31	31
College grad+ [Net]	26	27	25	17	33	28	12	33	46
College grad	17	17	17	13	21	15	9	24	25
Postgrad degree	9	10	8	4	12	13	3	9	21
Refused/Nr	2	3	1	1		0			
<b><u>HOUSEHOLD INCOME</u></b>									
Under \$25,000	23	19	27	31	17	23	54	-	-
\$25,000 but less than \$50,000	27	26	28	29	22	32	46	31	-
\$50,000 but less than \$75,000	17	18	16	15	18	18	-	69	-
\$75,000 but less than \$100,000	11	14	8	10	14	8	-	-	43
\$100,000 or more	14	15	13	8	21	11	-	-	57
Refused	7	7	7	6	8	7	-	-	-
MEDIAN (000s)	\$46.4	\$52.0	\$42.2	\$38.2	\$59.8	\$43.5	\$23.8	\$56.8	\$112.2

### Profile (cont.)

	Gender		Age			Household Income			
	TOTAL	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	<\$40K	\$40-74K	\$75K+
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>UNWEIGHTED BASE</b>	<b>1,007</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>507</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>261</b>
<b>EMPLOYMENT</b>									
Employed full time	34	41	26	31	49	20	21	43	58
Retired	19	17	20		3	55	22	20	11
Not currently employed	16	16	16	25	14	9	24	7	3
Self-employed	9	13	5	5	14	6	8	8	14
Employed part time	8	4	13	9	9	7	12	5	6
Homemaker	7	0	13	9	10	2	7	6	6
Student	6	7	5	20	-	-	6	12	2
Refused/Nr	2	2	1	1	1	-	1	-	-
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>									
Married	49	52	47	32	60	55	30	61	74
Single and never been married	25	31	20	54	17	9	32	19	12
Divorced	9	8	10	3	11	13	14	8	6
Widowed	7	3	11	1	3	19	12	8	1
Separated	4	2	6	5	5	3	9	2	0
Living as married	4	2	5	5	5	1	4	2	6
Refused/Nr	2	2	1	1	-	0	-	-	-

Profile (cont.)

	TOTAL	Gender		Age			Household Income		
	%	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	<\$40K	\$40-74K	\$75K+
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>UNWEIGHTED BASE</b>	1,007	500	507	114	305	574	321	250	261
<b><u>SPANISH/HISPANIC/LATINO</u></b>									
Yes	13	14	12	26	11	5	16	7	13
No	84	82	87	73	88	94	84	93	86
Refused/Nr	2	4	1	1	0	1	1	0	0
<b><u>RACE*</u></b>									
White/Caucasian	74	75	73	61	79	83	66	79	85
Black/African-American	12	9	15	15	12	11	18	12	6
Asian/Asian-American	2	2	2	5	1	0	0	5	2
Some other race	12	14	10	24	9	5	17	8	7
Refused/Nr	3	4	3	1	3	2	1	1	2
*Multiple responses allowed									
<b><u>REGION</u></b>									
Northeast	18	20	17	18	19	19	14	22	18
Midwest	22	23	21	18	25	20	24	18	19
South	37	34	39	42	33	37	41	41	33
West	23	23	22	23	23	24	21	19	30



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# Appendix: Questionnaire

On another subject...

B1 Following are several statements relating to product safety.

For each, please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree.

[RANDOMIZE ITEMS]

- 01 Strongly agree
- 02 Somewhat agree
- 03 Somewhat disagree
- 04 Strongly disagree
- 99 DON'T KNOW

- A. The federal government should make consumer complaints about safety hazards with products available to the public
- B. The federal government should require testing by manufacturers of children's products like jewelry, pacifiers and toys to ensure they do not contain any harmful substances
- C. The federal government should require testing by manufacturers of products like baby carriers or slings, cribs and strollers to ensure their safety
- D. The federal government should set safety standards for all children's products
- E. The federal government should take steps to keep unsafe consumer products out of the marketplace

B2 How interested are you in each of the following?

Would you say very interested, somewhat interested, somewhat disinterested or very disinterested?

[ROTATE ITEMS]

- 01 Very interested
- 02 Somewhat interested
- 03 Somewhat disinterested
- 04 Very disinterested
- 99 DON'T KNOW

- A. The ability to find out if another consumer experienced a safety hazard with a consumer product
- B. The ability to access a database maintained by the government where you can report and search safety problems with consumer products

- B3 Thinking about the past several years, would you say that your confidence in the safety of the following products has increased strongly, increased somewhat, stayed the same, decreased somewhat or decreased strongly?

[RANDOMIZE ITEMS]

- 01 INCREASED STRONGLY
- 02 INCREASED SOMEWHAT
- 03 STAYED THE SAME
- 04 DECREASED SOMEWHAT
- 05 DECREASED STRONGLY
- 99 DON'T KNOW

- A. Appliances
- B. Building products, like paint, flooring, drywall
- C. Cars
- D. Children's products
- E. Foods
- F. Medicines

- B4 Please tell me whether you are aware of the following.  
(READ LIST. RECORD AS MANY AS APPLY. WAIT FOR YES OR NO FOR EACH)  
[ROTATE]

- 01 The recalls during the past several years of cribs for design problems that presented safety hazards
- 02 The recalls in 2007 of toys that contained harmful substances
- 98 NONE OF THESE
- 99 DON'T KNOW

- B5 Are you aware of the Consumer Product Safety Commission?

- 01 YES
- 02 NO
- 99 DON'T KNOW