

Australia Issues Guidelines: Suggested Practice for Drawstrings on Children's Clothing

In order to reduce the risk drawstrings pose to children, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has developed these voluntary guidelines for the Australian market based on US and European safety standards, ASTM F1816-97 and EN 14682:2007.



No printed copy of the publication has been released but an electronic version is available at the ACCC Product Safety Australia site listed below.

Suggested Practice for Children's Clothing

As a general guide, the ACCC suggests that manufacturers and retailers supplying children's clothing carefully assess the safety of all drawstrings, decorative cords, shoulder straps and functional cords protruding from the back of all children's clothing. The ACCC also suggests alternatives such as removable sashes and belts as safer options. It is recommended that suppliers undertake a risk assessment incorporating the safety features detailed below. These safety features are based on the following voluntary US and European standards:

- ASTM F 1816-97 *Standard Safety Specification for Drawstrings on Children's Upper Outerwear*
- EN 14682:2007 *Safety of Children's Clothing - Cords and Drawstrings on Children's Clothing – Specifications.*

Hood and Neck

Young children from birth to seven years - Garments should not have drawstrings, functional cords or decorative cords. Decorative items such as bows should not have any free ends longer than **75 mm** or loops greater than **75 mm**.

Older children and young persons aged seven to fourteen years – Garments, including jackets and windcheaters, should not have drawstrings with any free ends. It is preferred that these garments use alternative closures such as, but not limited to, snaps, buttons or Velcro, rather than drawstrings. Functional and decorative cords should not measure more than **75 mm** in length at either end.

Waist/Lower-Hem

The end of any waist or lower-hem drawstrings should measure no more than **75 mm** from where the string extends out of the garment to its end, when the garment is expanded to its fullest width. If garments are supplied with drawstrings the ACCC also suggests that:

- the drawstring be sewn to the garment at its midpoint so the string can not be pulled to one side and lengthened enough to catch on something;
- toggles or knots at the ends of all drawstrings are eliminated where possible as these can create a 'hook' or stopper that gets caught in small spaces. Other alternatives are encouraged in these cases;
- lower/ankle hem drawstrings should be finished on the inside of the garment.

More Information

Text of the Guideline: <http://www.productsafety.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/987273>

How Can Bureau Veritas Help?

If you have any questions regarding drawstring requirements or other softlines concerns, please contact your customer service representative or email: cps.info@bureauveritas.com

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