

## Should we use them?

Many people believe that using a baby walker will help their child to walk earlier and provide them with a safe place to play. Research has been carried out in different countries, you may be surprised by what they found.

## The Results of the Research

- Baby walkers can actually slow down the speed at which your child learns to walk.
- Babies may be able to move around more quickly in a walker but are more likely to be injured, as they do not have awareness of danger. Many of these accidents still happen when the children are being supervised.
- Babies in walkers are not able to explore their environment and do not get the opportunity to alter their play position or move through normal patterns of movement. This can slow down the rate at which they develop.

We recommend that you **DO NOT** use a baby walker.

If you still use a baby walker the following advice is useful.

- Never leave your child on their own, even for a few seconds.
- Never use walkers near stairs, steps, or thresholds. Check that surfaces are flat and free of objects that may cause tipping-over.
- Make sure that both of the child's feet are able to touch the floor and are flat on the floor.
- Never carry the walker with the baby in it.
- Keep the child away from sources of heat, i.e. radiators or fires.
- Follow the height and weight restrictions given by the manufacturers.
- Do not use the walker if it is broken or damaged.

The child Accident Prevention Trust state that baby walkers are hazardous and their use should be avoided. They highlight that deaths of babies associated with baby walkers have occurred in Canada, USA, Germany and Britain.

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