



SLOVENSKI STANDARD

SIST-V CEN/CLC Guide 14:2009

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Child safety - Guidance for its inclusion in standards

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Ta slovenski standard je istoveten z: **CEN/CLC Guide 14:2009**

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CEN/CENELEC Guide 14

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The present guide provides advice and information to assist standards' writers of CEN/CENELEC Technical Committees fulfil their obligations under EU Mandate M/293 — Mandate to the European Standards Bodies for a Guidance document in the field of safety of consumers and children – Child safety. This Guide replaces CEN Guide 12 which was adopted by the CEN Technical Board through Resolution BT C020/2006 and which was approved by CENELEC BT decision D130/C104 for publication as a CEN/CENELEC Guide.



**European Committee for
Standardization**

**European Committee for
Electrotechnical
Standardization**

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Foreword

The scope of mandate M/293 covers the protection of children from unintentional physical and/or mental injury associated with products, constructions and services. This includes those not intended for use by children but which are easily and generally accessible to them. The mandate covers foreseeable use and misuse within the normal behaviour of children.

For the purposes of the mandate, children are defined as persons up to the age of 14 years of age. The scope of this Guide is therefore similarly limited, except where standards can more effectively protect those under 14 years of age by considering their safety together with that of persons 14 years of age and over.

Mandate M/293 refers to any product, construction or service in the field of consumer safety that is easily and generally accessible to children or young people up to 14 years of age. Excluded from the mandate are professional areas of work where persons under 14 years of age do not have access or are not likely to have access. Also excluded are areas prohibited to the general public and those prohibited to pedestrians in general, such as traffic areas.

Where products, constructions or services are subject to regulatory requirements, e.g. European legislation or national laws, these requirements take precedence over any conflicting information given in this Guide.

In this Guide, product, construction or service is used to refer to the subject of any European Standard.

Annexes A, B, C, D, E and F are informative.

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This Guide supersedes CEN Guide 12:2006.

Introduction

This Guide provides advice and information to assist experts on working groups of European Standards Technical Committees fulfil their obligations under EU Mandate M/293 — Mandate to the European Standards Bodies for a Guidance document in the field of safety of consumers and children — Child safety.

This Guide is an informative document, acting as an aide-memoire to assist standards' writers take children's safety into account when drafting new or revising existing standards. It is intended to stimulate discussions in working groups, guiding users towards safe solutions without potentially constraining examples. It also recognizes the need to consider context and national cultures and practices in determining safe solutions. It is not a specification of absolute safety criteria that can be applied.

In the preparation of this Guide it is noted that the approach and philosophy utilised in the preparation of standards for products, constructions and services will depend on whether specific levels of qualified supervision are required or not.

The Guide does not prescribe solutions but instead presents

- an outline of children's development, explaining how this leads to different approaches to promoting safety from those used to meet the needs of adults;
- a structured approach to risk assessment reflecting children's changing behaviour, physical characteristics, and need to explore and learn;
- examples of what children can do at different stages of development, the resulting hazardous behaviours and characteristics (Annexes B, C and D);
- examples of potentially effective preventive measures for consideration (Tables C.2 and D.2).

This guide should not be used in isolation from the advice contained in other publications as it complements the information that is provided in other publications, especially

- ISO/IEC Guide 51, *Safety aspects — Guidelines for their inclusion in standards*, which presents the over-arching principles of risk assessment
- ISO/IEC Guide 50, *Safety aspects — Guidelines for child safety*, which adopts a hazard-based approach when applying risk assessment, taking into account the characteristics of children
- CEN/TR 13387, *Child-use and care articles — Safety guidelines*, which presents detailed guidance for the safety of children up to 4 years
- CR 14379, *Classification of toys — Guidelines*
- This Guide and ISO/IEC Guide 50 are complementary rather than alternatives. ISO/IEC Guide 50 provides a description of child development and behaviour and a detailed overview of the hazards relevant to children. By reading ISO/IEC Guide 50 one gains a helpful overview of the particular issues that have to be taken into account to provide safety for children. This Guide expands on this and offers mechanisms to enable the user to reach appropriate solutions in a structured way.

Many experts will have extensive experience of the safety issues relevant to the product, construction or service that is the subject of the standard. Others will have experience of child safety issues with a wider range of products, constructions or services. Their combined experience of safety issues will be substantial and will normally identify all major hazards of the product, construction or service. This Guide is not a replacement for that experience. Since the range of products, constructions or services, and the hazards that can arise when children interact with them is so wide, any document that tried to detail all considerations would be too long to be of practical use to standards' writers.

Where products, constructions or services are subject to regulatory requirements, e.g. European legislation or national laws, these requirements take precedence over any conflicting information given in this Guide.

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1 Scope

This Guide provides guidance for European Standards' writers on meeting the requirements of European Commission mandate M/293 to address issues of child safety in standards.

In the preparation of this guide it is noted that the approach and philosophy utilised in the preparation of standards for products, constructions and services will depend on whether specific levels of qualified supervision are required or not.

This Guide does not exclude consideration of hazards where the means of protecting adults are equally effective for children. Generally, however, it does not refer to safety requirements that are not particular to children.

The scope of this Guide overlaps with that of guidance in some directives or mandates covering products, constructions or services *intended* for children, e.g. toys, childcare articles. Guidance for specific products, constructions or services intended for children is more appropriate than this general child safety guidance.

This Guide is applicable to existing or potential standards for products, constructions or services that might:

- be potentially harmful to children but not adults; or
- pose greater risks to children than adults; or
- require means of protection for children that are additional or different to those that are effective for adults.

This Guide does not consider children with special needs.

Where products, constructions or services are subject to regulatory requirements, e.g. European legislation or national laws, these requirements take precedence over any conflicting information given in this Guide.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this Guide. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

EN 71 (all parts), *Safety of toys*

EN 1176 (all parts), *Playground equipment*

CEN/TR 13387, *Child use and care articles — Safety guidelines*

ISO/IEC Guide 14, *Purchase information on goods and services intended for consumers*

ISO/IEC Guide 37, *Instructions for use of products of consumer interest*

ISO/IEC Guide 50, *Safety aspects — Guidelines for child safety*

ISO/IEC Guide 51, *Safety aspects — Guidelines for their inclusion in standards*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this Guide, the terms and definitions given in ISO/IEC Guide 50, ISO/IEC Guide 51 and the following apply.

3.1

carer

person who exercises responsibility, however temporarily, for an individual child's safety.

This could be either:

- a) ***non-qualified carer: a parent, grandparent, older sibling who has been given a limited responsibility over a child, adult acquaintance, a young person who is a baby sitter, or***
- b) ***qualified carer: a person trained to exercise responsibility for the safety of children or young people, for example a trained/qualified teacher, childminder, youth leader or sports coach.***

4 Background to childhood development

4.1 How children's safety differs from adults' safety

Childhood is a path rather than a definable state. Although a cross-section of children of a particular age can appear to exhibit consistent characteristics, the individuals are continually developing. Some developments expose children to new hazards while others improve their ability to protect themselves. Therefore, an essential element of child safety is matching the means of protection to the age of children at risk. The aim should be to make the progression along the developmental path safe for a child, as well as addressing safety at each stage of childhood.

Children's abilities, skills, knowledge and judgement develop rapidly throughout childhood. Increasing levels of awareness and responsibility can be expected as children grow older. Older children's height, weight, strength, skill and knowledge overlap the lower ranges for adults. Children develop at different rates but by the time they reach adulthood most have developed a level of knowledge that enables them to judge accurately the degree of caution that is appropriate in familiar or unfamiliar situations. The one common factor all children share is that they are substantially less wise and less cautious than most adults in relation to hazards. This Guide therefore focuses on the psychological development of children as well as on their physical development.

Standards will never be able to completely protect children from the results of their own actions even when they could be expected to know better. Those products, constructions or services intended for children cannot be expected to be made safe for unrestricted access by children at all stages of development.

Both adults and children need protection from hazards. It is not possible to prevent all injuries to children. Except in relation to deaths and serious injuries it is not even realistic to expect to reduce children's risks of accident to the prevailing level for adults. This Guide therefore emphasizes the need to focus on hazards that are a greater risk to children and/or where the potential injury is more serious for children.

4.2 Children's need to explore, experiment and learn from mistakes

An essential part of the process of a child becoming an adult is the need, and desire, to explore limits and to try new experiences. Minor injuries are part of every child's learning process and are a far more normal part of their lives than is the case for adults. This should be borne in mind when considering what levels of safety are reasonably practicable within the limits imposed by functionality and affordability. However, children require greater protection than adults against fatal or permanent injuries because they may not be capable of assessing the risks involved in potentially hazardous situations or may be too young to take responsibility.

Often the greatest risk to children is at a single stage of development or with their initial use of a product, construction or service. To exclude all children from access to or use of a particular product, construction or service can be counter-productive to the development of their abilities and their understanding of safe practice. A better approach is to develop strategies for helping children complete the process of becoming adults safely.

5 Criteria for assessing risks and hazards

5.1 Developmental approach to child safety

In order to make a comprehensive assessment of risks to children and young people a developmentally based approach to hazard analysis is recommended. This involves three steps.

- a) Identifying at which stage(s) of child development, exposure to the product, construction or service is likely to give rise to potential hazards.
- b) Identifying the key physical and behavioural characteristics and abilities of children or young people at these stages that might place them at higher risk of injury (or risk of more severe injury) than adults.
- c) Identifying practical means of injury prevention that are likely to be effective at these stages of child development (see Clause 9).

Annex A provides an overview of Annexes B, C and D, which contain tables of guidance criteria that aim to help to identify any susceptibility of children to injury or any additional risk of injury that might be expected due to their characteristics or behaviour. Developmental stages that can have a significant impact on children's exposure to particular hazards in a product, construction or service, or on their ability to handle the hazards safely, are indicated. The differences between children and adults are also shown. Since these tables focus on hazards likely to be unique to children they do not necessarily show hazards that are identical for both adults and children.

5.2 Adult safety and alternative approaches

This Guide assumes that standards' writers have already addressed issues of general safety and the specific safety of adults. Most standards' writers will have extensive experience of the safety issues relevant to the subject of the standard, or of child and consumer safety issues generally. Their combined experience should normally identify all major hazards of the product, construction or service. There is general safety guidance in ISO/IEC Guide 51 and (on safety aspects of consumer information) in ISO/IEC Guides 14 and 37.

While this Guide's child development approach is comprehensive, it might not be the most appropriate method for all standards projects. ISO/IEC Guide 50 provides an alternative hazard-based approach that might be more convenient for products, constructions and services intended primarily for young children. For some areas of children's lives, comprehensive safety standards are already well developed, particularly for toys (EN 71), playgrounds (EN 1176) and childcare items (CEN/TR 13387). These documents are based on a wealth of experience in child safety and should be considered when dealing with similar hazards for similar age groups.

5.3 Children's ages and abilities

Within one product, construction or service standard, it might be necessary to protect children of different ages against different hazards using very different means. Generally, a hazard will be specific to a narrow age range of children. This range should be established in order to identify the most appropriate means of protection. However, care should be taken that protecting against a hazard for one age group does not introduce new hazards for younger or older children.

Annexes B, C and D show the characteristics of child development and illustrations of the development and behaviour of children. In principle, each of these needs to be considered individually. In practice, this assessment will generally involve no more than identifying:

- the stage of development or age at which a specific risk arises, e.g. when a child is first exposed to it; and
- the stage by which a child may be considered to be at no more risk than adults.

5.4 The roles of carers

Since all products, constructions and services cannot be made safe for unrestricted access by children, carers may be required or expected to provide a specific protective function. Where this is the case, this should be made clear in the hazard assessment. Consideration should be given regarding what information carers may need and how to provide it. **Where appropriate, the requirement for qualified supervision may assist in reducing hazards and improving safety.**

There can be residual risks associated with some products, constructions or services that are impractical to reduce because they are intrinsically linked to function. Voluntary acceptance of or informal consent to this risk by children, young people and/or their carers may be needed but it is only valid if those giving it understand their responsibility and have been correctly informed.

It is recognized that some actions are irresponsible within the limitations of what can be expected at the relevant stage of development. As with adults, standards cannot be expected to protect children and young people entirely from the results of their actions.

5.5 Cultural, generational and gender differences

The differences between cultures, genders and living environments need to be considered by standards' writers.

A further difference is that between generations. Standards' writers will have passed through childhood one or two generations earlier than the children for whom they are writing standards but it should not be assumed that children have acquired all the skills and experience that were normal for children in the past. For example, many children today have no experience of the hazards of open fires.

5.6 Limits to the reduction of risks

Overall risk assessment depends on both the potential frequency and severity of injuries. It is inevitable that children's exploration and experimentation will result in some minor injuries. It is usual for children to fall from a low height, trip over on level surfaces and bump into static objects (or other people). They will probably also be hit by moving objects, e.g. balls or other children. Apart from the immediate pain of such impacts, the injuries received are usually limited to cuts, bruises or grazes. Less frequently, but still inevitably, all children at some time have painful encounters with sharp blades or points and hot objects or liquids. This usually results in no more than a small cut or a minor burn that quickly heals.

Because of this, although the acceptability of risk of injury is a controversial issue, the following circumstances may be judged as not requiring specific protective action:

- a) where young children are exploring their environment, and the most severe potential injuries are limited to bruises, cuts, grazes, sprains or minor burns not requiring professional medical examination or treatment;
- b) where children and young people can be expected to appreciate that an activity is potentially dangerous and can choose not to participate, provided the potential injuries are limited to injuries requiring only initial professional medical treatment;
- c) where children and young people are taking part in **sports** and similar **leisure/educational** activities under the guidance of a **qualified**/trained carer and the maximum potential consequences of injury are limited to temporary disabilities, e.g. simple fractures of limbs.

The greatest emphasis on safety provision should be where the potential consequences could include death, permanent disability or scarring or where there is a high frequency of accidents. Where the elimination of hazards for everyone is impossible, preference should be given to the greater protection of children since they are too young to take the responsibility for accepting such risks themselves.

In some instances, certain child safety requirements in standards could be counter-productive or in conflict with safety and use requirements for other groups. A risk assessment should be carried out to provide a balanced solution.

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6 Relating child safety to development stages (standards.itih.ai)

6.1 The basic development/age bands

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In order to simplify child safety issues wherever possible, it is recommended that consideration should initially be limited to three major development/age bands of children:

- under 3 years old – babies and young children who need almost constant adult attention and supervision, both for personal needs and safety;
- 3–11 years old – whose safety needs are not easily generalized and for whom individual differences in behaviour can be as important as differences in physical development or specific skills;
- 12 years old and over – who are within the normal anthropometric range of adults, and who need direct supervision only in specific situations (usually ones new to them).

Annex A provides further advice on this. The tables in Annexes B, C and D provide detailed reference information on child exposure, characteristics of child development and means of safety protection according to stages of development. The tables do *not* indicate precise age limits to each band. Where standards need to set advisory age limits, it is necessary to take into account the severity of the potential injury and the practicality of enforcement.