

Stroller Ride Dangerously Bumpy, Parents Say

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There is a piece of legislation wending its way through Washington that would make safety testing for children's products mandatory -- and could have an effect on the type of experience you're about to read -- a family that says a defective product put their little consumers at risk over and over again.

Strollers are supposed to ease the pain of parenting, lighten the load and lessen the stress. That's the reason one Northwest Side family of five bought a double stroller.

"I need it for everything. I mean, when I have to go to the store, when I have to take them to school," parent Nancy Ligue said.

Ligue said she got an Evenflo "Take Me Too" stroller early this fall to help take her kids on their 14-block walk to school.

She said it was smooth sailing until "The stroller ... tilted off to the side and I'm like, 'What is going on with this?'"

Ligue said one of the stroller's back wheels popped off, leaving her and her kids in the lurch. "I had to try to put it back in and try to keep it on while I'm juggling the stroller," she explained. Ligue said it was a scary experience she wrote off as a fluke until a few weeks later, the same

thing happened.

"The same exact thing happened," she said. "All of a sudden, the wheel comes off again!" She said a rear wheel came off another stroller after that, totaling three times that three separate Evenflo strollers malfunctioned.

"The third time, I was crossing the street and when the wheel came off, I was like, 'Oh no,'" she said.

Unbeknownst to Ligue, the same potentially dangerous situation has been reported online by dozens of Evenflo customers across the country, NBC5's Lisa Parker reported. One Nebraska parent warned, "This stroller could leave you stranded."

A Colorado mother wrote that parents should "beware of back wheel." A Texas woman advised consumers to "stay away," calling the stroller "a worthless piece of junk."

Chicago-based group Kids In Danger said this is not the first time a troubled product has stayed on the market even as parents nationwide spoke out loudly and clearly about it. The safety group says that fact is a symptom of a larger problem.

"Because it's a voluntary system, because the (Consumer Product Safety Commission) is very stymied in taking any mandatory action, they really have to cajole the manufacturers to go along with them," said Kids In Danger spokeswoman Nancy Cowles.

Nancy Ligue's husband, Gary, said he didn't "know how they could pass this product on the market like that with a little plastic piece that's holding it on."

Stroller giant Evenflo first blamed the Ligues' problem on assembly at the family's end, but later said it has now revised the Take Me Too tandem stroller instructions and is introducing design

modifications related to the rear wheel assembly.

The company wouldn't say if parents like the Lignes led to the change -- parents who feel their children deserve a better level of safety than they got with the Take Me Too.

"I'm disappointed, frustrated, angry, mad," Nancy Ligne said. "Never show me that stroller again."

By law, the CPSC cannot tell NBC5 whether or not it is investigating this product. The proposed legislation sponsored by Illinois congresswoman Jan Schakowsky would give that agency more teeth, and replace voluntary safety standards with mandatory ones -- the kind of standards already in place for items in your home, like toasters and TVs.