

\$3 mil. settlement in crib death

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Two University of Chicago professors whose 16-month-old son was killed when a faulty crib collapsed on him got a \$3 million settlement Thursday from Hasbro and the local manufacturer that made the crib under Hasbro's name.

Unlike other parents who have settled with Hasbro over the cribs, Linda Ginzel and Boaz Keysar insisted on the settlement being made public.

"Part of our goal from the very beginning was to discover what happened and make the information public," said Boaz Keysar, a psychology professor like his wife, Linda Ginzel.

"One thing we discovered is Hasbro had put its 'Playskool' name on the product and did not do any testing on the product," Keysar said.

Keysar and Ginzel were so upset to learn that the crib that killed their son Danny three years ago had been recalled five years earlier that they started a nonprofit group, Kids in Danger, to publicize problems with children's products and push for tougher safety standards.

"We've been working on federal legislation with U.S. Rep. Jan Schakowsky [D-Chicago] to require mandatory testing for durable children's products, which is not now required," said Nancy Cowles, executive director of Kids in Danger.

Keysar and Ginzel plan to funnel some of the \$3 million settlement into the nonprofit group, they said.

"This will really allow us to support our attempts to change the system," Keysar said. In addition to mandatory testing, the organization seeks to make it harder for manufacturers to keep secret any settlements with families whose children have been killed from such products.

Danny had been at a day care center in Lincoln Park when the top rails of the Playskool Travel-Lite portable crib collapsed, strangling him.

His parents at first thought it was a freak accident, then found out about the 1993 recall that they say the company handled half-heartedly.

Four children died before Danny and another child died after.

"Six babies died, one for every 2,000 cribs sold," Keysar said. "Thousands of these cribs are still out there--time bombs. They did not do an effective recall. They did the bare minimum. They issued a press release."

Kolcraft Enterprises Inc., the Chicago manufacturer of the crib for Rhode Island-based Hasbro, was responsible for the recall, said attorney David Wise of Corboy & Demetrio, which represented the parents.

Attorneys for Hasbro and Kolcraft did not return calls seeking comment.

Cowles encouraged parents concerned about the safety of their children's cribs to check the organization's Web site at www.kidsindanger.org