



Association of Paediatric Chartered  
Physiotherapists

Printed with kind permission of Cumbria Partnership NHS  
Foundation Trust

## Babywalkers– Is your child safe?



The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy is the professional, educational and trade union body for the UK's 50,000 chartered physiotherapists, physiotherapy students and associates

Association of Paediatric Chartered Physiotherapists

[www.apcp.org.uk](http://www.apcp.org.uk)

Published: June 2011

Review: June 2014



Physiotherapists and other Health Professionals **DO NOT** recommend the use of baby walkers. There are two main reasons for this:-

**Safety** – even under supervision there are high numbers of accidents reported every year, including; falling down stairs, head injuries, burns, scalds, and trapped arms/ legs.

**Delayed development** – many studies have shown that babywalkers do not encourage development and often actually delay the achievement of motor milestones. Contrary to popular belief, they **DO NOT** teach a child to walk. They can cause a child to walk on it's toes which may continue when they walk independently.

**If you choose to use a babywalker with your child-**

- Never leave your baby unattended
- Never let your baby near steps or open doors eg. patio windows
- Avoid use near open fires, cookers or radiators or trailing wires
- Check floor is free of objects that could cause tipping
- Your child can move at up to 7mph, faster than you can react
- Make sure both feet are flat on floor, not on toes
- Not suitable for babies who cannot support their heads
- Use for a maximum of 20 minutes at a time

**Play safe** and encourage development without a babywalker. Use these free alternatives

- Encourage your baby to play on it's tummy on the floor
- Encourage rolling and sitting up
- Encourage crawling and pulling to stand

These activities will help your child to:

- Learn about their body
- Explore their surroundings
- Progress to walking

All of these encourage your child's development.

**Useful references**

[www.safekids.co.uk/baby-walker-safety.html](http://www.safekids.co.uk/baby-walker-safety.html)

[www.capt.org.uk](http://www.capt.org.uk)

Only buy or use a baby walker that complies with BS EN 1273:2005: the date is important (the last four digits are the year the standard was approved, in this case 2005) because that's when more stringent safety requirements were imposed, **do not buy second hand baby walkers.**