

# SAFE GUARDS

SGS CONSUMER TESTING SERVICES

SOFTLINES

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## AUSTRALIA RECOMMENDS DRAWSTRINGS CODE OF PRACTICE ON CHILDREN'S CLOTHING

The Australia Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has recently issued a voluntary guideline to the garment industry for drawstrings requirements on children's clothing.<sup>1</sup> The ACCC hopes that this guideline will continue minimising the risk associated with the use of cords and drawstrings on children's garments. The guideline is based on the European standard EN 14682<sup>2</sup> and the voluntary US standard ASTM F1816<sup>3</sup>.

The ACCC advise recommends that manufacturers and retailers assess the risk of using drawstrings, decorative cords, shoulder straps and functional cords protruding from the back of all children's clothing. It also advocates the use of safer alternatives such as removable sashes and belts. Risk assessments on children's clothing should be carried out using EN 14682 or ASTM F1816.

### ACCC'S RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS

The ACCC recommended requirements are summarised in the table 1.



<sup>1</sup> [ACCC, Guidelines—Suggested practice for drawstrings on children's clothing.](#)

<sup>2</sup> [SafeGuards 075/11.](#)

<sup>3</sup> Regarding the US legislation, please note CPSC has recently voted unanimously to approve a new federal safety rule for drawstrings in children's outerwear. See [SafeGuards 127/11.](#)

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TABLE 1

AREA WITH CORDS AND DRAWSTRINGS	RECOMMENDED REQUIREMENTS
Hood and neck	<p><b>Young children from birth to 7 years</b></p> <p>Garment should not have drawstrings, functional cords or decorative cords. Decorative items such as bows should not have any free ends longer than 75 mm or loops greater than 75 mm.</p> <p><b>Older children and young persons aged 7 to 14 years</b></p> <p>Garments including jackets and windcheaters should not have drawstrings with any free ends. It is preferred that these garments use alternative closures such as, but not limited to snaps, buttons or Velcro, rather than drawstrings. Functional and decorative cords should not measure more than 75 mm in length at either end.</p>
Waist/ Lower-hem	<p>The end of any waist or lower-hem drawstrings should measure no more than 75 mm from where the string extends out of the garment to its end, when the garment is expended to its fullest width.</p> <p>If garments are supplied with drawstrings the ACCC also suggests that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the drawstring be sewn to the garment at its midpoint so the drawstring cannot be pulled to one side and lengthened enough to catch on something.</li> <li>toggles or knots at the ends of all drawstrings are eliminated where possible as these can create a "hook" or stopper that gets caught in small spaces. Other alternatives are encouraged in these cases.</li> <li>lower/ankle hem drawstrings should be finished on the inside of the garment.</li> </ul>

SGS is committed to update interested parties as developments occur. You can also refer to SafeGuards [070/11](#), [075/11](#) and [127/11](#) to get the latest information about drawstring requirements for children's clothing in Taiwan, Europe and the US. Throughout the global network of laboratories and offices, we are able to offer high quality consultation and testing services on textile and garment products. For more information on our services, please feel free to contact us or visit our website at [www.softlines.sgs.com](http://www.softlines.sgs.com).

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