

Group Wants Fisher Price iPad Seat Recall

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Washington (AP) — Ahh, the first year of a baby's life — learning to sit up, crawl, even walk. But how about playtime in a baby seat with an iPad and some cool apps?

Fisher-Price is selling an infant seat with an attachment where parents can insert an iPad so baby can watch video content aimed at the youngest children — an idea that is being criticized by the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood. The Boston-based advocacy group started an online petition campaign Tuesday, urging Fisher-Price to recall its Newborn-to-Toddler Apptivity Seat for iPads.

CCFC says it's not healthy for a baby's development and encourages parents to leave baby alone.

"The seat is the ultimate electronic babysitter. Its very existence suggests it's fine to leave babies all alone with an iPad inches from their face," said Susan Linn, the group's director, in an interview. "Babies thrive when they are talked to, played with and cuddled, not when they are alone with a screen."

Fisher-Price, in response, said the Apptivity Seat is a niche product that is only available online — one of more than a dozen seats for infants — and is not meant to be seen as an educational product for children.

The seat, which resembles a bouncy seat, has an attachment with colorful toys that dangle so a baby can reach and grab. The case where a parent could insert an iPad

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has a large built-in mirror for the baby to see its face when there's no iPad. In its product description, Fisher-Price says parents can download apps to their iPads with soothing sounds and high-contrast patterns that help infants develop eye-tracking skills.

Fisher-Price spokeswoman Juliette Reashor said the seat has a time-out feature that only allows for ten minutes of activity with an app before requiring a manual reset, so the app wouldn't play endlessly.

The attachment bar for the iPad can also be removed from the seat, if the parent prefers that.

The American Academy of Pediatrics discourages any electronic "screen time" for infants and toddlers under 2. It cites research that found infant videos can delay language development, and warns that no studies have documented a benefit of early viewing.

In 2012, the Federal Trade Commission — which enforces truth-in-advertising laws — agreed with the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood that the developer of "Your Baby Can Read" lied when it promised consumers it could teach babies as young as 9 months old to read. That business shuttered after the FTC imposed a \$185 million settlement.

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