

BACKGROUND

Injuries to children through strangulation or by clothing entrapment, had been of increasing concern in Ireland and the EU through the 1990s. Incidents typically involved the entrapment of older children by cords and strings in moving vehicles (such as bicycles and the doors of buses) and strangulation of children up to 7 years of age on playground equipment.

In response the EU Commission issued a mandate for CEN (Mandate M309) to develop standards and specifications for the safety of cords and drawstrings on clothing for children up to 14 years of age.

COMMON QUESTIONS

- Q.** Why does BS EN 14682 refer to ages of children and then set specification by height?
- A.** Age of the child tells us the stage of development and provides some indication of the kinds of behaviour, activities they will normally be involved in and probable level of supervision. However the size designations used in Europe for children's clothing differ by country; in the UK, children's clothes are most frequently sold by child's age but in most EU countries the prime indicator is height.
- Q.** The standard defines young children as up to age 7 years and older children as age 7 up to age 14 years. My size ranges are 0-5 years, 5-9 years and 9-15 years. What should I do?
- A.** Best practice is to use the more onerous requirement for the whole range, so for example, your range for age 5-9 year old should meet requirements for the younger child and the whole of the 9-15 year range should meet the older child requirements, even though age 15 is beyond the scope of the standard. This avoids any confusion for your customer, especially if the garments are sold on the same rails in stores.
- Q.** Why is ski wear in scope, but specialist sportswear out of scope?
- A.** In Scandinavia, children frequently ski to school: it is their equivalent to cycling to school. As with all older children, they usually travel to school unsupervised, consequently the risks are higher and so these garments were put in scope.

BOLTON CONSULTANCY LTD

An independent consultancy offering confidential advice on textiles, textile products, clothing and consumer products. We have in-depth understanding of the processes systems and requirements needed to assure product integrity and compliance with National & International Standards and legislation.

AFFILIATIONS

Bolton Consultancy is a member of:

- British Standards Institution
- National Children's Wear Association

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions on the content of this information sheet or wish to discuss any other technical matters please contact Bolton Consultancy Ltd.

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CORDS & STRINGS ON CHILDREN'S CLOTHING

BS EN 14682: 2014



Standard	Developed under EU mandate, EN 14682 was first published in 2004 and is now in its third edition. EN 14682:2014, was harmonised in August 2015.	Varying requirements are provided dependent upon the potential risk of entrapment but maximum lengths have been selected to ensure the garment will still function. Lengths of below waist area ties, draw cords and sashes for example, are limited to avoid accidental entrapment.	Use	The Standard should be used as part of the garment safety risk assessment. The full risk assessment should also consider potential hazards not covered in EN14682 and take into account: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the age of intended wearer, • foreseeable activities and use (including foreseeable mis-use), • level of supervision, • normal behaviours and abilities of a child of this age.
GPSD	The Standard is not compulsory but a requirement to provide only safe garments is imposed in law by the General Product Safety Regulations GPSD 2004. Under the GPSD, products must be safe or pose the minimum of risk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • under normal and foreseeable use, • for the lifetime of the product. 	Revisions: 2007	Although no technical changes were made EN 14682:2004 was revised in 2007 to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve clarity, • remove ambiguity, • include additional definitions, • include added diagrams. 	Garments complying with EN 14682 meet the minimum safety requirements for cords and strings on children's clothing. As the specification is also linked to the fit of the garment, the most practical way of assessing compliance is during garment fitting by the garment technologist and designer. Harmonisation of EN 14682:2014 replaces the earlier versions - presumption of conformity with the GPSD general safety requirement is achieved only through compliance with the 2014 version.
What is safe?	Garments that comply with EN 14682:2014 are considered to conform to the GPSD general safety requirement.	2014	A fully updated and revised edition published in 2014, incorporates new and improved definitions for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • belt - to differentiate from "tied belt", • tied belt and sash, • braces (suspenders), • three dimensional embellishments. 	Further guidance on the application of the standard can be found in PD CEN/TR 16446:2012, a technical report published in January 2013 to explain some technical aspects of garment design and manufacture. Formally a "Published Document" not a standard, this was developed in recognition of rapidly changing garment styles in the children's clothing sector.
Scope	All clothing intended for children up to 14 years of age is in scope but there are specific exclusions for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child use and care articles, • shoes and boots, • gloves, hats, scarves and neckties, • belts, braces, bags and purses, • religious clothing. <p>If intended for use during supervised activities for limited periods the following also fall out of scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • celebratory clothing, • specialist sportswear, • theatrical costumes, • aprons. 	Head and neck now replaces the term hood and neck. Requirements have been revised to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • notes concerning hanger loops, • consideration of the whole head and neck, • head and neck area decorative cords for younger children; with specific limitations, • fixing of drawstring adjustment toggles, • different treatment of close fitting, and loose flowing garments in specific circumstances. 	Further guidance	
Coverage	The standard considers hazards according to where on the body the feature will be in wear. It limits the use of cords and drawstrings, and where they are permitted specifies the maximum acceptable length. The allowable use and sizes of loops, embellishments and toggles are also specified.	Other changes include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved explanation and new methods of measurement are described in Annex D, • some new diagrams in Annex F. 	

The information contained in this note is believed to be accurate at the time of printing but is for information only and should not be relied upon. Reference should be made to the published standard which can be obtained from your national standards body.