



Power Point Safety Cover A Brief History

In December of 1999, Catherine Hovenbitzer, now mother of four, faced the problem that many parents do, of how to protect their babies and young children from the potential dangers in and around the home.

In most cases, parents are able to reduce the risk of injuries to their loved ones by installing baby and child safety products. Cath had progressively utilised many of the products on the market to solve the problems, before her third child, eight month old “Micky”, found them.

One problem was proving difficult to solve. As Micky was now crawling, he made a beeline for the power points, as they were at his eye level, especially when something was plugged in. The cords were something to pull on, and in two or three tugs he had the cords out, leaving an active and exposed power point.

Casualty admissions of children suffering electrical shock injuries from power points remain alarmingly high. Concerned at the prospect of her child injuring himself, Cath went about looking for something to cover active power points. She looked everywhere and was amazed to find that there was nothing on the market that solved this problem.

In addition to moving furniture in front of them, Cath even tried covering the power points with gaffer tape and cardboard, anything to restrict access to the power point. All of her ideas were temporary, ineffective, unattractive and potentially dangerous in themselves.

Cath thought there had to be a better way.

This is the classic story of someone who had a good idea to solve a real problem and without any knowledge of where to start, through perseverance invented a practical and cost effective solution.



Innovation/Originality

After realising that there was nothing on the market to completely restrict access to active power points, Cath started coming up with different ideas. The solution had to be practical, attractive and easy for an adult to use, whilst providing the child with necessary protection.

Over an 18 month period, a number of designs were sketched, drawn and adapted until the current design was found. Subsequent research, extensive patent searches and investigation concluded that the design had the features and benefits that Cath was looking for and satisfied all the criteria for a patent application to be submitted.

The Power Point Safety Cover has a patent pending.

Child Safety

The Power Point Safety Cover helps prevent access to babies and young children to power cords and switches, whilst enabling adults to access them when needed.

Safety Everywhere

Around the home, in the workshop or workplace, the Power Point Safety Cover helps retain power leads in the socket and prevents accidental unplugging of electrical cords and appliances.

Although earth leakage devices are being fitted to new and renovated homes since 1992, it is acknowledged by the Office of the Chief Electrical Inspector that it will be many years before **ALL** homes and workplaces will be protected.

It is a misconception too that having an earth leakage device eliminates all possibility of electrical injury – it only reduces the intensity of the shock. To a young child, even a minor shock may cause serious injury, at the very least, distress for parent and child.

Statistics on electrocutions from power points of 0 to 9 year olds obtained from the Victorian Emergency Minimum Dataset (VEMD), which is a record of emergency department presentations at 28 Victorian public hospitals, do not show a fall in the number of accidents. Over 70% of accidents are in the age group 0 to 5 years of age. Fingers, keys and other objects have found their way into the power points and resulted in trips to the hospital.