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## Counterfeit Drug and Children

**Deadly Internet Pharmacies. The Ryan Haight Story:** Ryan Haight has had his name enshrined in an [act of Congress](#)<sup>1</sup> because he died after [overdosing on pain medications](#)<sup>2</sup> he bought without a prescription via a fake online pharmacy. Ryan was able to buy drugs online without a prescription, because the fake pharmacy he found was willing to approve his purchase without him ever seeing a doctor. Children old enough to use the Internet are old enough to be exposed to the same danger that killed Ryan Haight.

**Counterfeit Antibiotics Given to Children Result in Hospital Visits:** In May 2011, hospitals in Austin, Texas began seeing [kids who were not getting better](#)<sup>3</sup> in spite of having been given “antibiotics” to treat their infections. What their parents were actually giving them were fake, over-the-counter antibiotics marketed to Spanish-speaking residents. The FDA subsequently found that the fake antibiotics were being sold in [at least six states](#)<sup>4</sup>, and cautioned that the fake drugs could be available all over the country.

**The Risky Proposition of Counterfeit Drugs for Children:** Children are especially sensitive to dosage variations and drug quality, due to their relative size and youth. Attempts to save money on childhood medications by shopping at online pharmacies could easily jeopardize their health by exposing children to dangerous counterfeits. Our report [“A Risky Proposition”](#)<sup>5</sup> is aimed at educating parents about the dangers of counterfeit drugs.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.justice.gov/olp/pdf/hr-6353-enrolled-bill.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com/stories/ryan\\_haights\\_story.html](http://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com/stories/ryan_haights_story.html)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.safemedicines.org/2011/05/texas-children-given-fake-antibiotics-234.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.safemedicines.org/2011/05/fake-antibiotics-found-in-six-states-246.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://safemeds.typepad.com/RiskReport.pdf>