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## **AXIS ELEVATES YOUTH STYLE AND INTRODUCES NEW SAFETY FEATURE**

Grown-up design extends collection beyond kid years

**HIGH POINT**, N.C., October 13, 2016 – Precocious kids rejoice. Smartstuff introduces Axis, a modern baby and youth collection with clean, contemporary lines and stainless steel accents and hardware. A medium gray finish, called Symmetry, highlights an exposed grain, adding depth and texture to its appearance. The feel is sophisticated, even a bit metropolitan.

Axis' versatile design can take a child from crib to college, and beyond. Absent of ornamentation or color that suggests a child's collection, it can transition easily into an adult bedroom.

"Axis is a wonderful addition to the Smartstuff portfolio because its style provides some additional merchandising flexibility for our retail partners, a reflection of the product's uniqueness in the marketplace," said Universal Furniture Director of Marketing Neil MacKenzie. "The collection adapts to work with all ages and can easily transition into the teenage years or a second bedroom," added MacKenzie. "Stainless accents and floating panels with a gray finish lend a mature look to sleep, storage and study pieces."

The 20 sku collection features three beds (bunk, panel and floating headboard), nightstands (one floating; one with Smartstuff nightlight), a chest of drawers, dresser, desk, chair and bookcase. A slatted, all stainless steel bench complements the metal trim found on most pieces in the collection.

Standout design features will have mom and dad coveting pieces for their own room. The bookcase features a rectangular stainless-steel spine which supports floating wooden shelves. A similar arrangement on the floating bed headboard creates a see-through appearance, striking against contrast colored walls.

Modern styling and modern study reach into the desk and chair design. The two-tiered desk features a large workspace plus a handy shelf for books, writing tools and memorabilia, leaving the lower workspace free of clutter that can distract from the task at hand. A stainless framed desk chair with upholstered seat and back is wide enough to fit two, a convenient perch for those "can you help me please?" homework moments.

As Smartstuff enters its fifth year in production the brand has continued to evolve. "We've been very pleased with the growth of the brand and we feel it's a reflection of the product. There is not a smarter, more intelligently designed youth line available in the marketplace today," said Universal Furniture President Jeff Scheffer. "We are excited about what we can deliver as a vertical manufacturer and style leader."

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## **NEW SAFETY FEATURE**

Smartstuff furnishings already incorporate many safety features including anti-tip hardware and built-in drawer stops to prevent drawers from falling out. But in light of recent tipping concerns, an additional safety mechanism has been developed and is incorporated into Axis and all future Smartstuff collections. The Smartstuff Safe Stop Drawer mechanism deters children from creating a “drawer ladder” by preventing opening more than one drawer in a column simultaneously. Smartstuff recommends that the anti-tip kit continue to be used with case pieces for enhanced safety.

“The interlocking drawer device we used on the new Axis chest and dresser is taken from the office industry and used on lateral filing cabinets,” said Gary Bocock, vice president of engineering and process improvement for Universal Furniture. “These devices have been used for years to prevent more than one drawer to open at a time in a vertical bank.”

Bocock currently is a member of the American Standards for Testing and Materials and sits on the sub-committee 15.42 that includes Furniture Safety. He’s also a voting member of the committee that develops standards such as ASTM F2057-14, the voluntary standard for clothing storage units.

“We can’t control how our products are ultimately used in the home,” added Bocock. “But we can assure that our products will provide a safe environment for children and families if used as prescribed in our literature.”

“Although all our collections incorporate safety features, we always look for enhancements,” said MacKenzie. “The Safe Stop Drawer mechanism is a smart addition that helps ensure a safe environment for children.”

## **About Universal**

Universal Furniture creates quality furnishings for the whole home with a focus on function and lifestyle. The company’s casegood, upholstery, accent and accessory designs are developed under the brand names Universal Furniture (Lifestyle Collections), To The Trade (Interior Design) and Smartstuff™ (Baby and Child), and sold through retailers and interior designers throughout North America and around the world. Founded in 1968, Universal Furniture is a brand of Samson Holdings, one of the world’s largest vertically integrated furniture manufacturers. For more information, please visit [www.universalfurniture.com](http://www.universalfurniture.com), or find us on Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest [@UniversalFurn](https://www.instagram.com/UniversalFurn).

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