

Playground Safety

- Provide adult supervision at all times.
- Wear shoes to protect feet.
- Make sure your child's clothes are tucked in; items that may get caught in the equipment can be a strangulation risk (hoodies, scarves, loose hanging strings, jewelry, hooks, cords, and helmets).
- Remove bicycle helmets prior to playing.
- Make sure playground equipment is age appropriate.
- Check the temperature of the equipment to make sure it is not too hot.
- Look for broken equipment, protrusions (such as S-hooks and bolts), sharp points or edges, and that equipment is anchored securely.
- Make sure the surface around playground equipment is made of wood chips, mulch, sand, pea gravel, or rubber mats; materials made with concrete, asphalt, grass, blacktop, packed dirt, or rocks are not safe for playground surfaces.
- Surfaces around playground equipment need to be 12 inches deep and extend at least 6 feet in all directions from play equipment.
- Check for spaces that could trap children, such as openings in guardrails or between ladder rungs; these spaces should measure less than 3.5 inches or more than 9 inches.
- Make sure platforms and ramps have guardrails to prevent falls.
- Remove tripping hazards, like exposed concrete footings, tree stumps, and rocks.
- Carry a basic first aid kit with you.

Review and enforce playground rules.

- ◇ Play responsibly; no pushing or roughhousing.
- ◇ Take turns; one person at a time on a swing, slide, monkey bars.
- ◇ Remind children to sit down while swinging, slow down before getting off, and not walk close to someone swinging.
- ◇ Climbing up the front of a slide is not acceptable.
- ◇ Look before you jump or slide; make sure no one is below you.



Playground Injuries

Between 2001 - 2008, an average of 218, 851 preschool and elementary children received emergency department care for injuries that occurred on playground equipment. Forty deaths were associated with playgrounds.

- 51% of the injuries happened on public playground equipment
- 19% occurred on home playground equipment
- 20% not recorded
- 1% Other

Of the incidents reported:

- 67% involved falls or equipment failure
- 8% hazards around but not related to the equipment
- 7% collisions with other children or the equipment
- 7% entrapments
- 11% other

Reference: CPSC October 29, 2009

