



Playground Injury Prevention Checklist



Supervise children at the playground

- You need to see the children you are supervising at all times.
- Remove necklaces and drawstrings from your child's clothing before they use the playground in order to avoid strangulation.
- Your child should always wear a bicycle helmet while riding his or her bike, but he or she should remove it before playing on the playground to avoid strangulation.

Survey the playground site

- Inspect the playground for hazards such as broken glass, litter, sharp objects, broken equipment and for tripping hazards like exposed concrete footings, tree stumps, and rocks.

Check the equipment

- Know the type of equipment that is appropriate for your child's age and make sure that he or she plays on that equipment.
- Check the equipment temperature. Metal equipment, particularly slides, can cause serious burns in hot, sunny weather. They should be in shaded areas.
- Elevated surfaces, platforms and ramps, need guardrails to prevent falls.
- All spaces on equipment must be less than 3½ inches or more than 9 inches to help your child avoid getting his or her head stuck.
- No bolt should stick out and there should be no hook that could catch your child's clothing. If a dime can fit through any hook connecting swings, it is dangerous.
- Check the equipment for sharp edges or points that could cut your child's skin.
- Check the playground regularly to see that the equipment is in good condition and free of broken or missing parts. Wood equipment should have no rot or splinters. Plastic equipment should not be cracked.

Examine the surfacing

- Acceptable playground surfaces include loose-fill materials, such as wood chips, shredded rubber, sand or pea gravel. However, without consistent maintenance these surfaces can hide hazardous materials. Loose fill should be 12 inches deep. Hard surfacing - asphalt, concrete, dirt and grass should never be used under equipment. Rubber tiles, mats or poured rubber are safer surfaces for your child to play on.
- Generally, safety surface zones for equipment are six feet in all directions in order to protect what's called a fall zone. For swings, the length of the fall zone should be twice the height of the beam from which the swing hangs.
- Immediately report unsafe conditions to the owner or operator of the playground, the principal of the school, the director of the children's center or director of the park.