



Safe & Secure

PLAYGROUND SAFETY

Playgrounds and outdoor play equipment offer children fresh air, friends, and exercise. So it's important for parents and Providers to make sure that faulty equipment and improper surfaces don't ruin the fun.

You can make the playground entertaining and safe for your children by checking equipment for potential hazards and following some simple safety guidelines.

Adult Supervision

Before you visit a playground, check to make sure that play areas are designed to allow an adult to clearly see children while they are playing on all the equipment.

Surfaces

A proper playground surface is one of the most important factors in reducing injuries — and the severity of injuries — that occur when children fall from equipment. The surface under the playground equipment should be soft enough and thick enough to soften the impact of a child's fall.

Design and Spacing

Playground equipment should be designed for three different age groups: infants and toddlers under 2, 2- to 5-year-olds (preschoolers), and 5- to 12-year-olds (school-age).

In the safest playgrounds, play areas for younger children are separated from those meant for older children and signs clearly designate each area to prevent confusion.

Younger children should not play on equipment designed for older ones because the equipment sizes and proportions won't be right for small children, and this can lead to injury.

Maintenance and Inspection

Check for objects (like hardware, S-shaped hooks, bolts, and sharp or unfinished edges) that stick out on equipment and could cut a child or cause clothing to become entangled. All hardware on equipment should be secure, with no loose or broken parts. Plastic and wood should show no signs of weakening, and there should not be any splintered or rusted surfaces.

Teaching Children about Playground Safety

Safe playground equipment and adult supervision are extremely important, but it's only half of the equation: Children must know how to be safe and act responsibly at the playground. If they know the rules of the playground, they are less likely to get hurt.

Play is an important part of children's physical, social, intellectual, and emotional development. Following these safety tips will help your children play as safely as possible.

