

PLAYGROUND SAFETY TIPS (YOU CAN'T BE TOO CAREFUL)

Source: Safe Kids Worldwide

Supervise Kids Using Playground Equipment at All Times

1. Actively supervise children on playgrounds, watching them climb, jump and swing.
2. Check playgrounds where children play. Look for hazards, such as rusted or broken equipment and dangerous surfaces. Report any hazards.
3. Teach children that pushing, shoving or crowding while on the playground can be dangerous.
4. Dress appropriately for the playground. Remove necklaces, purses, scarves or clothing with drawstrings that can get caught on equipment and pose a strangulation hazard. Even helmets can be dangerous on a playground, so save those for bikes.
5. Little kids can play differently than big kids. It is important to have a separate play area for children under 5.
6. Ensure that children use age-appropriate playground equipment. Separate play areas for children under 5 should be available and maintained.

Ensure Safe Surfacing Beneath and Surrounding Playground Equipment

1. Avoid playgrounds with non-impact absorbing surfaces, such as asphalt, concrete, grass, dirt or gravel.
2. Recommended surface materials include: sand, pea gravel, wood chips, mulch and shredded rubber. Rubber mats, synthetic turf and other artificial materials are also safe surfaces and require less maintenance.
3. Surfacing should be at least 12 inches deep and extend at least 6 feet in all directions around stationary equipment (fall zone). Depending on the height of the equipment, surfacing may need to extend farther than 6 feet.
4. For swings, make sure that the surfacing extends, in the back and front, twice the height of the suspending bar. So if the top of the swing set is 10 feet high, the surfacing should extend 20 feet.

Check That Playgrounds Are Inspected and Maintained by Qualified Personnel

1. Double check to make sure of age-appropriate, well-maintained playground equipment.
2. If there are any hazards in a playground, report them immediately and do not allow children to use the equipment until it is safe.
3. Report any playground safety hazards to the organization responsible for the site (e.g., school, park authority or city council).