Playground Safety Week 2018

10 PLAYGROUND SAFETY TIPS FROM THE EXPERTS

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SAFETY AND PLAYGROUND SURFACING
National Playground Safety Week

in the United States is April 23-27, 2018. As warmer weather and more outside playtime begins, now is a great time to review playground safety and prepare playgrounds and our kids for summer fun!

We asked experts from various organizations for their best playground safety tip. We narrowed down their recommendations to the following top 10 list.
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Inspect Your Playground

Many common playground injuries can be prevented from first checking the equipment, as well as reporting any hazardous materials in the area. A quick but thorough sweep of the area before daily use could prevent unnecessary accidents.

‘’If you see anything dangerous on the playground such as broken glass or unsafe equipment, make sure to tell an adult right away so they can help, and you can get back to playing!

– International Play Equipment Manufacturers Association
Dress appropriately for the weather and prepare for it to change by bringing an extra jacket, blanket or umbrella. Do not let your children wear clothing which can get caught in the playground equipment. Avoid dresses or hooded sweatshirts with drawstrings. These could cause strangulation or other injuries.”

– Playground Professionals

Dress for Safety

It is very easy to overheat during physical activity, and then quickly cool down to an uncomfortably cool temperature in brisker cool weather. Therefore, it is important to ensure your children are dressed appropriately. If they choose to dress lighter because they know they will warm up, have warm clothes or a sweater on hand in cooler weather, and vice versa.
Train playground supervisors or teachers responsible for keeping kids safe on the playground [in proper playground safety]. As an expert witness in cases involving playground injuries I often find that playground supervisors report receiving little or no training on how to properly supervise the playground.

– Peaceful Playgrounds

**Actively Supervise**

Supervision is not only essential for young children, but for children of all ages. Make certain that not only you, but those you entrust with your children’s care, are properly prepared to supervise and intercede, should a dangerous situation or injury arise.
When playgrounds are maintained with appropriate surfacing under them, the likelihood of injury decreases when a child falls.

– Safe Kids Wisconsin

Maintain Your Playground

Kids enjoy running around, and climbing and having fun. It’s just the way they are. Unfortunately, this also means they occasionally fall. The possibility of injury from falling can be greatly reduced from properly installed surfaces under and around equipment, as well as ensuring that equipment stays up-to-code.
Use the Playground Safety Report Card

With many things running through the minds of parents and guardians as their children play, it is often easy to forget a few seemingly minor safety recommendations. A hardcopy checklist is a very helpful way to ensure the playground being utilized is in a safe and well-supervised condition, and can help to prevent many avoidable mistakes.

“This year, we are encouraging parents and grandparents to help keep playgrounds safe by using the Playground Safety Report Card.”

– National Program for Playground Safety
Avoid playgrounds with non-impact absorbing surfaces, such as asphalt, concrete, grass, dirt or gravel. Ensure that there is safe, ADA accessible surfacing beneath and surrounding playground equipment.

– International Play Association

Check for Safe Playground Surfacing

Some playgrounds, although they may look very fun, may be poorly maintained, or with inadequate surfaces for safe play. No matter how enticing the equipment may be, or how convenient the location, it is always best to avoid these types of playgrounds, due to the unnecessary hazards they could create. Playgrounds with woodchip or concrete surfaces are prime examples of playground surface hazards.
Avoid Ropes

You may have fond memories of playing with ropes as a child, whether it be rope swings over lakes, rope ladders to treehouses, or rope bridges. As fun as these times may have been, ropes are also inherently dangerous. Ropes often can look stronger than they appear, and a perfectly strong-looking rope can easily fail under excess tension. Factor in the risk of strangulation or cutoff of circulation, and they pose a risk that is not worth taking.

“Never attach ropes, jump ropes, pet leashes or strings to playground equipment; children can strangle on these.”

– United States Consumer Product Safety Commission
Ensure that your children use appropriate playground equipment based on their age and development level. Every child develops differently, so if they want to try the “big kid” swing, the monkey bars or a more challenging piece of equipment and you feel like they’re ready, go for it.

– Safe Kids Worldwide

Have the Children Use Age Appropriate Equipment

Know your children and look out for their well being. Not every child develops at the same rate—especially when it comes to motor skills and muscle strength. Some children will be ready for different play equipment and different times. Be sure to supervise them and encourage them to stay on appropriate equipment, and be there to help them when they are ready to use equipment new to them.
Check Playground Equipment Temperatures

An adult should test the temperature of playground equipment before letting little ones loose. Equipment can quickly become too hot for tiny hands in the hot summer sun.

– National Safety Council
While no one likes to think about falls, they are a common occurrence in children of all ages, and can lead to serious injuries. It is important to practice safe falling techniques, such as tuck and roll, or breaking falls with knees and elbows, to help alleviate potential long-term injuries or even concussion.

Practice Safe Falls

Ask someone like your teacher or physical education teacher to show you how to fall safely. We all need to learn how to land as safely as possible even on a very hard surface. Practicing the tuck and roll techniques in gym class on a padded surface can make the difference from a scrap or bruise to a broken arm or leg to a really serious bump on the head.

“International Playground Safety Institute
Playground Safety Week isn’t the only time we should learn and practice safe tips. Safety on and around the playground is very important for our kids. Equally as important we want their childhood play to be safe, healthy and happy. Encourage your kids to get outside and explore your yard, neighborhood, and local playground. Let them enjoy the outdoors, their friends, and your company and attention.

- adventureTURF

About adventureTURF

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