Playground Safety

Playgrounds are a great place for children to exercise and develop new skills. Unfortunately, more than 213,000 children are treated in emergency departments in the U.S. for playground-related injuries each year.

Playground Safety Tips

- Remove bike helmets before playing on equipment. Helmets can cause head entrapment and strangulation when used on playgrounds.
- Wear closed-toe shoes during play.
- Do not wear clothing with drawstrings or jewelry around the neck.
- Avoid trampolines, rope swings, swinging exercise rings and trapeze bars.
- Check to make sure play equipment is appropriate for your child's age and ability.
- Always supervise your children on the playground.

Children Younger than 6 Years

Young children do not have the upper arm strength, hand grip size and coordination for some play equipment. The following are NOT recommended for children younger than 6 years:

- Free-standing arch climbers
- Overhead rings
- Parallel bars
- Sliding poles
- Spiral slides
- Log rolls
- Seesaws
- Track rides

Condition of Equipment

Not all playgrounds are safe. Injuries can be prevented by checking the condition of the equipment and surroundings before play.

- Do not use equipment installed over blacktop, concrete, dirt or grass. Play equipment should have sand, rubber, mulch or other safety surfacing under and around it.
  - Most injuries happen when a child falls from equipment, especially if onto a hard surface.
- Stay away from equipment with rust, cracks, rotten areas and loose or missing parts.
- In warm weather, play equipment can get hot enough to cause burns. Check the surface first before allowing children to play.
- Do not allow children to add strings, ropes or pet leashes to playground equipment.
  - The most common cause of playground-related death is strangulation from clothing, strings or ropes.

CIPA Child Injury Prevention Alliance

For more information, please contact the Child Injury Prevention Alliance at (614) 398-CIPA (2472), www.childinjurypreventionalliance.org or info@childinjurypreventionalliance.org
facebook.com/ChildInjuryPreventionAlliance twitter.com/CIPAInjury

Content provided by the Center for Injury Research and Policy at Nationwide Children's