

Playgrounds and outdoor play equipment can provide your child with fun, fresh air, and exercise, but they can also pose some safety hazards. Faulty equipment, improperly protected surfaces, and careless behavior are just a few of the dangers that can cause serious injuries to children on playgrounds.

To ensure playground safety, the Consumer product Safety Commission has set forth safety tips for parents and community groups to follow:

- **Surfaces around playground equipment** must have at least 12 inches of wood chips, mulch, sand, or pea gravel, or mats made of safety-tested rubber or rubber-like materials.
- **Protective surfacing must extend** at least 6 feet in all directions from play equipment. For swings, be sure surfacing extends in back and front and twice the height of the suspending bar.
- **Play structures** more than 30 inches in height are spaced at least 9 feet apart.
- **Eliminate dangerous hardware** like open "S" hooks or protruding bolt ends.
- **Spaces or Gaps** that could trap children, such as openings in guardrails or between ladder rungs, measure less than 3.5 inches or more than 9 inches.
- **Sharp points or edges** in playground equipment must be eliminated or covered with protective caps.
- **Eliminate tripping hazards** such as exposed concrete footings, tree stumps, and rocks.
- **Provide guardrails** for playground equipment with elevated surfaces, like platforms and ramps to prevent falls.
- **Routine safety inspections of equipment** are necessary to make sure all equipment is in good condition.
- **Carefully supervise** children on playgrounds to make sure they are safe from **ALL** hazards.

All of us have an important role to play in making the playground a place that's entertaining and safe for all of our children. In addition to these *Playground Safety Tips* - teaching our kids how to play safely is of paramount importance. If they know the rules of the playground, it's less likely they will become injured.

This information may not address all hazardous conditions at your location and does not warrant workplace safety or compliance with federal, state or local laws.