



## PLAYGROUND SAFETY

Many injuries that happen on playgrounds are because of poor adult supervision. Approximately 74% of injuries among children 12 and younger happen on public playground equipment and 23% happen on home playground equipment. Preschool aged children are at greatest risk of fall-related deaths and hospitalizations on the playground. The following checklist will help keep your child safe on the playground.



### Supervision

Nearly half of playground-related injuries among children are because of poor adult supervision. Adults need to supervise children on playgrounds to identify possible equipment hazards, observe children, intervene and facilitate play when necessary. Strings on clothing or ropes used for play can cause accidental strangulation if caught on equipment.



### Age-Appropriate Equipment

Preschoolers, ages 2 - 5, and children, ages 5 - 12, are developmentally different and need different equipment located in separate areas to keep the playground safe and fun for all. Parents need to be aware. Most injuries related to age-inappropriateness playground equipment happen to children ages 0 - 4 who play on equipment designed for children ages 5 - 12. However, older children should also not play on equipment designed for younger children either. Equipment that is too small may not be developmentally challenging and may create hazards by having small steps or narrow spaces.

Age-Appropriate Playground Equipment	
Ages 2 - 5	Ages 5 - 12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activity panels</li> <li>• Swings</li> <li>• Tot swings</li> <li>• Small slides</li> <li>• Lower platforms</li> <li>• Spring rocking equipment</li> <li>• Sand/water tables</li> <li>• Crawl tunnels</li> <li>• Playhouses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swings</li> <li>• Tire swings</li> <li>• Spiral slides</li> <li>• Horizontal ladders</li> <li>• Chain and net climbers</li> <li>• Free standing arch climbers</li> <li>• Sliding poles</li> <li>• Merry-go-rounds</li> <li>• Seesaws</li> <li>• Track gliders</li> </ul>



### Playground Surface

Nearly 70% of all playground injuries are from children falling off of equipment onto to the surface. Acceptable surfaces include hardwood fiber/mulch, pea gravel, sand and synthetic materials such as poured-in-place, rubber mats or tiles. Playground surfaces should not be concrete, asphalt, grass, blacktop, packed dirt or rocks.



### Safety of Playground Equipment

Make sure the equipment is anchored safely in the ground, all equipment pieces are in good working order, S-hooks are entirely closed, bolts are not protruding, and there are no exposed footings.

*\*Material obtained from the National Program for Playground Safety, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA*