

Keeping Students Safe on Playgrounds: Ten Easy Steps



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1) Age Appropriate Equipment

- All playground equipment is broken down into three age categories
- Toddler Age 6 Months - 23 Months Old
- Pre-School Age Children 2-5 Year Olds
- School Age Children 5-12 Year Olds

Pre K & Early Childhood only play on 2-5 year old equipment!



Adult Exercise Equipment

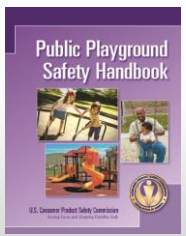
- ASTM F3101-15 (2015) Unsupervised Public Use Outdoor Fitness Equipment

ASTM - American Society of Testing & Materials



2) Playground Purchases

- Choosing a Playground Equipment Supplier
- Sales Staff MUST BE Current Certified Playground Safety Inspectors (CPSI)
- <http://www.nrpa.org/Professional-Development/Certification/CPSI/CPSI-Course-Calendar/>
- Sales Staff should be knowledgeable regarding the latest ASTM F1487-11 & CPSC standards and guidelines, ADAAG law



2) Playground Purchases

- Building Principal, Facilities & Business Office assist PTO/PTA in playground vendors and potential purchases.
- Ideal purchase for a school playground for hundreds of students at one time.
- Playground Supervisor Visibility







3) ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG)

- Any time new playground equipment installed or addition of equipment to existing playground.
- Federal Register October 2000
- <https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/buildings-and-sites/about-the-ada-standards/background/adaag#15.6> Play Areas
- Approach, Enter & Use
- Minimum Number of accessible play components both ground level and elevated play components
- Firm, stable & slip resistant accessible route (60-inch pathway)
- IPEMA Checklist for Access



ADA Accessibility Example

ADA ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINE (ADAAG CONFORMANCE)		
NUMBER OF PLAY EVENTS	33	
NUMBER OF ELEVATED PLAY EVENTS	8	
NUMBER OF ELEVATED PLAY EVENTS ACCESSIBLE BY RAMP	PROVIDED: 0	REQD: 0
NUMBER OF ELEVATED PLAY EVENTS ACCESSIBLE BY TRANSFER SYSTEM	PROVIDED: 0	REQD: 0
NUMBER OF ELEVATED PLAY EVENTS ACCESSIBLE BY RAMP OR TRANSFER SYSTEM	PROVIDED: 0	REQD: 4
NUMBER OF GROUND-LEVEL PLAY EVENTS	PROVIDED: 25	REQD: 3
NUMBER OF TYPES OF GROUND-LEVEL PLAY EVENTS	PROVIDED: 8	REQD: 3



4) Playground Installations

- Installation completed by professional contractors.
- If a community build then a playground rep must be on site during entire install. AUDIT conducted at end of install to ensure safety.
- If an item is installed incorrectly, head entrapments and other hazards may exist.



5) Falls are Cause of Most Injuries

- 79% of all playground injuries are Falls
- Falls are the MOST COMMON cause of injury on PUBLIC Playgrounds
 - 68% are falls to surface
 - 10% are falls to other parts of the equipment
 - 1 % are falls to unknown



Strangulation is the Cause of Most Deaths!!!!

Various Surfacing Materials- Certified?????

- Loose Fill**
- Wood Mulch (not CCA treated - weekly rake)
 - Wood Chips
 - Engineered Wood Fibers
 - Sand (weekly rake so soft)
 - Pea Gravel
 - Shredded Tires
- Unitary Materials**
- Rubber Mats, rubber tiles and poured rubber
 - See CPSC Table



ASTM F1292 Surface Material & ASTM F1951 ADA Accessible-Contract with Vendor & Warranty

Appropriate Surfacing

- Any material tested to ASTM F1292, including synthetic surfacing, engineered wood fiber, etc.
- Pea gravel
- Sand
- Shredded/recycled rubber mulch
- Wood mulch (not CCA treated)
- Wood chips

Inappropriate Surfacing

- Asphalt
- Carpet not tested to ASTM F1292
- Concrete
- Dirt
- Grass
- CCA treated wood mulch

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Table 2 – Minimum Compressed Loose-fill surfacing depths

Inches of	Loose-Fill Material	Protects to Fall Height (Feet)
6	Shredded/ recycled rubber	10
9	Sand	4
9	Pea Gravel	5
9	Wood Mulch (non-CCA)	7
9	Wood Chips	10

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6) Playground Supervision Training & Guidelines

- Same ratio of adults on the playground as there are in the classroom.
- Children should be visible to supervisors at all times –Scanning!
- Zoning
- Supervisors should be trained and follow the same rules.
- Emergency plan (notice of insect sting allergies, etc.)
- Emergency items: radio, whistle, phone, latex gloves, band aids, bull horn, etc.
- Supervisors trained in first aid and CPR.
- Consistency of Rule Enforcement!

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7) Playground Safety & Maintenance Training



- 36% of all injuries are due to Poor Maintenance, 6% poor installation & 4% poor layout
- Every Building Custodian
- Specific Guidelines for surface material
- Specific requirements for particular pieces of equipment: Swings, slides, track rides, horizontal ladders, protrusions, etc.



8) Playground Audit Conducted (CPSI)



- Audit is conducted immediately following installation and prior to playground opening
- Head Entrapment potential prior to 1981, however, still found in equipment after this date
- Audit conducted if weather incident such as high winds, frost heave



9) Inspections/Repairs & Recordkeeping

- Performed by trained staff – Building Custodian
- **Documented** with easy-to-use checklists/forms
- Should be based upon Manufacturer’s recommendations and entities policies and procedures
- Tailored to equipment and conditions identified in audit
- Based on frequency of use, type and age of equipment and local climate.
- Low Frequency (seasonally, in-depth inspection with focus on preventative maintenance) Document work orders.
- High Frequency (usually done frequently, identifies change with focus on routine and remedial maintenance) Includes surfacing materials.



10) Incident Investigation & Review



- Incident Report Completed by Playground Supervisory Staff
- Building Principal Signature
- Incidents reviewed by Building & District Safety Committee
- Identify hazards and Trends
- Risk control through risk reduction and prevention



Questions & Answers

Thank You for your Time!

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