

Playground Safety



True Story

A 6-year-old girl was standing on a swing at a playground. The playground had inappropriate surfacing and there was a lack of supervision. The little girl was pushed hard enough to throw her out of the swing onto the ground. She suffered a fractured skull and a blood clot to her brain, leaving her with learning difficulties and the need for daily medication.

-From the files of the British Broadcasting Corporation

The Facts

- Since 1990, at least 146 children have died from playground equipment-related injuries.
- In 2001, more than 235,200 children ages 14 and younger were treated in hospital emergency rooms for playground-related injuries.
- Lack of supervision is associated with 40% of playground injuries.
- Approximately 75% of public playgrounds lack adequate protective surfacing.

What You Can Do

- Do not use asphalt, concrete, grass or soil surfaces under playground equipment.
- Good playground surfaces include shredded rubber, hardwood fiber mulch or chips, and fine sand.
- Playground surfaces should be at least 12 inches deep and extend 6 feet in each direction beyond each piece of play equipment.
- Make sure you can see AND hear young children when they are at play.
- Always supervise children when they use playground equipment.
- Do not allow children to push, shove, crowd, or use playground equipment inappropriately.



Safe Kids Greater Des Moines, led by Blank Children's Hospital, is a grassroots organization dedicated to preventing unintentional injury in children ages 0-14.

For more information call (515) 241-6293 or visit www.dsmsafekids.org.