

RISK COMMUNIQUÉ

Playground Safety Rules

Safe playground equipment and adult supervision are extremely important, but it's only half of the equation. Students must know how to be safe and act responsibly at the playground. Rules for the playground should be minimal so the children and supervisors can remember them and follow them.

Here are some general playground rules to incorporate into your playground safety program:

- All games should be played only in appropriate areas.
- Do what the teacher or aide tells you to do. They are concerned for your safety.
- Stay within sight of teachers or aides.
- Stay within playground area.
- Never push or roughhouse while on jungle gyms, slides, seesaws, swings, and other equipment.
- Use equipment properly – slide feet first, do not climb outside guardrails, do not stand on swings.
- Do not jump off equipment. When you leave a piece of equipment, make sure that you check to make sure there are no other children in the way.
- Leave backpacks, and bags away from the equipment and the area where you're playing so that no one trips over them and falls.
- Never leave bicycles on the playground. Always put them in the bicycle stand.
- Playground equipment should never be used if it is wet or slippery.
- During the summertime if the equipment feels hot to the touch, it's probably not safe or fun to play on.
- Do not wear clothes with drawstrings or other strings at the playground. Drawstrings, purses, and necklaces could get caught on equipment and accidentally strangle a child.
- Wear sunscreen when playing outside even on cloudy days so that you do not get sunburned.
- No throwing rocks, sticks, snowballs, or other objects that might hurt someone.
- No wrestling or fighting.
- No running on sidewalks or stairs.
- Never push or shove.
- Never leave the playground area to chase after a ball. Call an adult for help.
- No rough games allowed.
- Do not try to carry a classmate on your back or shoulders.
- Do not kick, hit, or throw any type of balls against the building except in places especially for this purpose.
- Once you are outside, you are to remain outdoors unless otherwise instructed or have permission to enter the building.
- Do not play around or near buses or cars.
- Do not cross through a group playing a game to get to the other side of the playground – walk around.
- Tell your teacher or aide about broken things or broken glass on the playground.
- Look out for one another. Older students should be especially careful not to be rough with younger children.

General Apparatus Guidelines

This is a sample guideline furnished to you by Glatfelter Public Practice. Your organization should review it and make the necessary modifications to meet the needs of your organization. The intent of this guideline is to assist you in reducing risk exposure to personnel. For additional information on this topic, you may contact your GPP Risk Control Representative.

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- Do not carry objects while climbing on equipment.
- Bars and rings are for children who can reach them without help.
- At least one hand must be in contact with the apparatus at all times. Hands are the last part of the body to leave the apparatus.
- Apparatus should be dry when in use.
- Children should be taught to hang and drop, bending the knees upon landing, as the proper method to dismount from the apparatus.
- Do not sit on the apparatus.
- Do not play under the apparatus.
- Use warm water to release skin from metal during freezing temperatures.

You can also incorporate specific rules for specific equipment:

Swing Safety Tips

- Use swings in the sitting position only, do not stand or kneel.
- No jumping off swings.
- One person on one swing at one time.
- Do not cross directly in front of or behind swings while someone is swinging.
- Do not climb on swing support poles.
- Do not twist on the swings.
- Swing only forward and backward – not sideways.
- Do not play near swings when they are in motion.

Geometric Dome Safety Tips

- **Should not be used in a playground designed for children aged 2-5.**
- Games such as “chase”, “tag”, and “train” should not be permitted.
- Do not jump off the dome.
- Children should not play on the surface under the dome.
- Children should have at least three body parts in contact with the dome at all times, such as two arms and one leg.

See-Saw Safety Tips

- **Should not be used in playground designed for children aged 2-5** unless the seesaw has a spring-centering device to prevent abrupt contact with the ground.
- One child per seat.
- Do not jump off the seesaw.
- Children should always sit facing one another, not turned around.
- Hold on tightly with both hands while on a seesaw.
- Do not touch the ground or push off with hands.

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- Keep feet to the sides, out from underneath the seesaw.
- Stand back from a seesaw when it is in use.
- Do not stand beneath a raised seesaw.
- Do not stand and rock in the middle, or try to climb onto it while it is in motion.

Climbers/Jungle Gym Safety Tips

- **Free standing or arch climber and free standing climbing events with flexible components are not recommended for playground designed for children ages 2-5.**
- No shoving, pushing or horseplay.
- Be careful not to step on classmate's hands.
- Do not hang upside down from the bars.
- Do not stand on the top of the climber.
- Do not jump from the climber.
- Do not play under the climber while others are above you.
- Have both hands in contact with the jungle gym.
- Do not interfere with other children while climbing.
- Do not have too many children on the equipment at one time.
- Watch for those climbing up when you are climbing down.

Slide Safety Tips

- When climbing up the ladder, wait at the bottom until the person ahead has reached the halfway point on the steps, then begin climbing to the top.
- Take one step at a time and hold onto the handrail when climbing the ladder to the top of the slide.
- Never push or shove on a slide.
- Use only the steps to climb up the slide.
- When you get to the top of the slide, be sure that the person ahead has moved away from the bottom, then slide down and move away quickly.
- Slide down feet first in a sitting position. Do not straddle the slide, or go down backwards, or on your side.
- Only one person on the slide platform.
- No sliding down in groups. No trains.
- Do not climb on the support poles.
- Do not hand beneath the slide.
- No horseplay while on the slide.
- No leaning over edges of the slide.
- Keep your hands and arms inside the sides of the slide.

Merry-Go-Round Safety Tips

- **Should not be used in a playground designed for children aged 2-5.**

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- No standing while the merry-go-round is moving.
- No pushing or shoving allowed.
- Wait until it has come to a complete stop before getting on or off.
- Do not hang off the edge and hold on only with your feet.

Overhead Bar and Overhead Ladder Safety Tips

- Go in one direction only.
- Do not hang upside down on the bars.
- No pushing or shoving.
- No climbing or standing on top of the bars or jumping off the bars.
- Do not run under equipment when classmates are going across.
- Grasp the bars with both hands. Use overhand, reverse, or mixed grip.
- Do not try to reach for bars that are too far ahead.
- Start on the same side of the equipment and move across it in the same direction.

Overhead Ring Safety Tips

- **Should not be used in playground designed for children aged 2-5.**
- Rings are to be used for “traveling”; never for acrobatic gymnastic stunts.
- One child must get half way around before a second child starts.
- One child on the approach board at a time.
- Children should drop from ring to an approved surface below when their turn is completed

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