

# PLAYGROUND SAFETY

Playgrounds can be fun and exciting places for children, but did you know that a large number of injuries are associated with playgrounds? In 2001, playground equipment-related injuries for individuals younger than 20 totaled \$11.1 billion. Every year more than 500,000 injuries are related to playground equipment, and most of these injuries are caused by climbing equipment, swings, slides, and teeter-totters/seesaws. The following information can help ensure both you and your children a fun and safe playground experience.



## COMMON INJURIES & PERCENTAGES

INJURIES	PERCENTAGES
Falls to surface	58%
Falls (struck same equipment)	14%
Falls (struck other equipment)	2%
Impact with moving equipment	13.1%
Impact with stationary equipment	5.4%
Contact with protrusions, pinch points, sharp edges & sharp points	6.9%

Source: NEISS special study, April-December 1988. U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Directorate Epidemiology, Division of Hazard Analysis, Washington, D.C.

## NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT SAFETY (NPPS) NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

Use S.A.F.E. when going to and selecting playgrounds for your children

S = Supervision

A = Age-appropriate

F = Falling surface

E = Equipment maintenance

## AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS (AAOS) PLAYGROUND SAFETY

- Avoid playgrounds with concrete, asphalt, hard-packed soil, or grass. Use surfaces that are made of wood chips, mulch, sand, or shredded rubber.
- Steer children towards age-appropriate playground equipment.
- Make sure there is enough space for children to easily get off the slide or merry-go-round. Don't let them crowd around the exit areas.
- Verify that handgrips are shaped and sized for easy grasping.
- Swing seats should be made of plastic or rubber. (Avoid metal or wood.)
- Avoid any equipment that has openings wide enough to trap a child's head.
- Be able to clearly see your children on the playground.
- Remove any objects that could be tripping hazards (concrete footings, tree stumps, rocks).
- Inspect playground equipment for any loose bolts or bearings, rust or corrosion, or deterioration from use, rot, insects, or weathering.