



Child Care Safety Playground

Playground Supervision

- Establish and enforce simple safety rules. Consistent rules and procedures that are predictable help children feel safe and help the caregiver maintain structure.
- Consider writing up rules with the children, posting them at children's eye level in the program, and reviewing them frequently.
- Staff/Caregiver-to-child ratios must be maintained at all times in addition to not exceeding maximum group size.
- In day care centers and school age programs, children of different age groups may not commingle when using outdoor play areas, exercise areas, gym rooms, or other common areas of the center; they may share the same space as long as the space is large enough to allow the age groups to remain apart from each other.
- Staff and caregivers should check playground area and equipment for potential safety hazards before allowing children into the area or develop a procedure where this is done prior to the children arriving.
 - Staff and caregivers must be aware of and only allow children to use age-appropriate equipment.
- Check playground for environmental hazards such as pooling water or patches of ice and snow.
- Consider checking that all gates/doors to the playground area are secure, and verify that child safety devices are functioning properly.
- Staff and caregivers should not sit together or socialize.
- Staff and caregivers should spread out to all corners of the playground; staff and caregivers should be close enough to children to intervene when necessary.
- For safety reasons, staff and caregivers should consider standing and moving about designated areas while supervising children instead of sitting.
- All blind spots should be accounted for. Consider getting down on hands and knees to identify blind spots and hazards.

- Whenever ratios allow, one staff or caregiver should station him/herself close to the entrance/exit to allow for monitoring of gate/door.
- If there is only one staff or caregiver present on playground; activities could be limited to one area near the entrance to allow for monitoring of gate/door.
- All staff and caregivers must know how many children they are caring for and take name to face attendance.
- Directors and providers with employees and volunteers should consider making it a practice to conduct unannounced observations at playgrounds to make sure children are being supervised properly.
- Regulations must be followed at all times.

Outside Time IS NOT

- a break or social time for staff and caregivers,
- staff or caregiver planning time, nor
- a time for children to run aimlessly without regard to personal safety.

When You Have an Accident Involving a Child

- First, obtain appropriate medical treatment for the child which may include calling 911.
- Never move the injured child unless qualified medical staff instruct you to do so.
- One staff or caregiver should care for the child while the other caregivers supervise the rest of the group.
- The children take cues from you; if you panic, the children will also panic.
- Consider developing an emergency protocol that can be practiced with the children; the provider can use a specific phrase or sound that indicates that the children should stop what they are doing and stand or sit quietly so that they can hear directions.
- Notify the parent of the child involved; notify OCFS; and if appropriate, notify the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment.