

## Playground safety tips

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Even with the safest playground layout, design and surfacing, serious injuries can occur if kids are unsupervised.

Here are some tips from Child's Play, A Playground Safety Guide for Day Cares, Schools and Communities, by Safe Kids Canada in Ottawa.

Check the children:

Remove drawstrings from clothing, ensure skipping ropes aren't tied to swings or slides, and don't let kids wear bike or other helmets on equipment.

Don't allow kids on equipment with bare feet, which can get burned on hot surfaces and cut by debris. Toes can also get caught in equipment gaps and spaces.

Take off scarves, tie and tuck in shoelaces, and remove loose clothes if possible.

Check the playground for:

A quality surface under and around the playground equipment that will reduce the chance of injuries due to falls.

Adequate guardrails and handrails to prevent falls.

Spaces where a child's head or neck can become trapped.

Equipment parts that can tangle clothing or anything else around a child's neck.

Pieces of play equipment that are located far enough apart from one another.

Safe swings made of soft impact-absorbing material. Toddler seats should provide support on all sides and have no movable parts.

Safe slides with guardrails at the top platform, no entanglement points between the top platform and slide, continuous handrails from top to bottom.

Safely supervised water-play areas.

On-site supervision:

Keep within reach of younger children at all times. Spot them on equipment and be there when their hands or feet slip.

Encourage kids to wait their turn and know there should be one child on a piece of

equipment at a time. They should sit down on swings, go down slides feet first and hold on to hand grips and railings.

Ensure kids play on age-appropriate equipment.

Stop bullying behaviour.

Report concerns and accidents to the owners and operators of the playground.

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