



Playground Safety Tips

Everything you need to know to keep your kids safe at the playground.

With active supervision and some basic safety tips, every day at the playground can be a walk in the park.

Supervise Kids Using Playground Equipment

- » Actively supervise children on playgrounds. They often look for creative ways to use equipment that can be dangerous.
- » Check playgrounds where your children play. Look for age-appropriate equipment and hazards, such as rusted or broken equipment and dangerous surfaces. Report any hazards to the school or playground owner.
- » Teach children that pushing, shoving or crowding while on the playground can be dangerous.
- » Dress appropriately for the playground. Remove backpacks, necklaces, purses, scarves or clothing with drawstrings that can get caught on equipment and pose a strangulation hazard. Even helmets can be dangerous on a playground, so save those for bikes.
- » Little kids can play differently than big kids. It is important to have a separate play area for children under 5 years of age.



Falls are the most common type of playground injury, accounting for more than 75 % of all playground-related injuries. Proper surfacing can significantly reduce the chance of injury.



Choose the Right Play Area Based on Your Child's Age

- » Ensure that children use age-appropriate playground equipment. Separate play areas for bigger kids and children under 5 should be available and maintained.
- » For babies who are mostly crawling or at best learning to walk, the play area should have a smooth and easy surface to walk on.
- » If your baby has fairly good head control and can sit up with support (usually around 9 months old), give the baby swings a try.

Ensure Safe Surfacing Beneath and Surrounding Playground Equipment

- » Avoid playgrounds with non-impact absorbing surfaces, such as asphalt, concrete, grass, dirt or gravel.
- » Recommended surface materials include: sand, pea gravel, wood chips, mulch and shredded rubber. Rubber mats, synthetic turf and other artificial materials are also safe surfaces and require less maintenance.
- » Surfacing should be at least 12 inches deep and extend at least 6 feet in all directions around stationary equipment. Depending on the height of the equipment, surfacing may need to extend farther than 6 feet.
- » For swings, make sure that the surfacing extends, in the back and front, twice the height of the suspending bar. So if the top of the swing set is 10 feet high, the surfacing should extend 20 feet.



For more information contact Safe Kids Grand Forks at 701.780.1489 or visit safekidsgf.com.





Sandbox Safety

Everything you need to know to keep your kids safe in the sandbox.

- » Sand play areas must be separate from landing areas for slides, swings, etc.
- » Playgrounds should only be filled with sand labeled as a safe play material or sand that is specifically prepared for sandbox use. Sand from other sources/sites may contain potentially harmful substances.
- » Keep sandboxes covered with a lid or other covering when not in use. Fasten the cover to prevent children or animals from getting under it and to prevent contamination by animal waste. Covers should also be secured or stored in a safe place when they are lifted or moved to allow children to play in the sandbox.
- » Equip sandboxes with an effective drainage system that presents no safety hazards.
- » Use sterilized sand or smooth-surface, fine pea gravel in sand boxes instead of compacting sand. Pea gravel is considered to be a choking hazard and not recommended for infants and toddlers, but can be used for preschool aged children.
- » Sandboxes must be inspected for signs of contamination and safety hazards such as cat feces, insects, sharp objects, etc. before each use. It is important to use a rake to inspect the sand under the surface, instead of just looking at the top of the sand. Hazards are easily concealed in sand.



- » Remove sand contaminated with urine, feces, or other toxic substances, sanitize container and replace with fresh sand.
- » Treatment of sand with chemicals to attempt to sterilize it within the sandbox is not recommended. Sand, already installed in play areas, cannot be safely cleaned without leaving residue that could harm children.
- » Sand in sandboxes and play areas must be replaced as needed, and at least every 2 years.
- » Sandboxes should be placed in areas that are protected from wind. If this is not possible, try to make windbreaks by using bushes, trees, or fences. Dampening sand with water before play may also be helpful in preventing sand from blowing into children's eyes.
- » First aid for sand in eyes - Have child lie down, head to the side, and place a clean diaper (if available) next to head to catch water. Use clean cup to pour cool water over the child's eye. Continue to irrigate until the particles of sand are gone. Encourage the child to blink, but do not allow the child to rub his/her eye. Rubbing damages the eye. If irrigating does not work, cover the eyes and seek medical attention as soon as possible.