

PLAYGROUND SAFETY

INFORMATION AND REGULATIONS AROUND PLAYGROUND SAFETY

Children in schools and under the care of providers are required to have outdoor play time each day as long as the weather is not too hot or cold. (Above 90 degrees or a wind chill below 32 degrees). Playgrounds can be a great source of fun, however they also can be riddled with hazards. It is important to complete regular inspections prior to the children's use.

Playground Checklist

Play Equipment/Picnic Tables/Fences

- Cracks
- Warps
- Sharp/Jagged Edges
- Protruding Nails/Bolts
- Chipped/Peeling Paint
- Splintering of Wood or Metal
- Cracking and Pinch Points
- Rusting
- Broken or Damaged Anchors
- Stability of Structure
- Loose Bolts, Nuts or Caps
- Links/Chains are Secure
- All Attachments Secure
- Moving Parts- Working, Lubricated
- Gates Latching
- Energy Absorptive Materials Under Equipment
- Check for Environmental Hazards in Tires, Under Structures, Swings, Sand Pits, etc.

Environment/Surroundings

- Metal Temperatures
- Broken Glass
- Trash
- Drugs/Paraphernalia
- Needles
- Tripping Hazards (Rocks, Vines etc.)
- Slipping Hazards (Ice, Mud etc.)
- Hives- In & Above Ground
- Standing Water/ Poor Drainage
- Poisonous Plants/ Mushrooms
- Animals
- Feces
- Violence

NYS OCFS REGULATIONS

There must be a plan/diagram how the children get to any nearby park, school yard or playground.

Play equipment:

- must be sturdy and free from rough edges and sharp corners.
- must be in good repair and be placed in a safe location.
- must be used in a safe manner.
- must be used specifically for its intended purpose. Such equipment and apparatus may be used only by the children for whom it is developmentally appropriate.

Swings and other moving play equipment must have 20 feet in front and behind the equipment to avoid any contact.

Standing water is forbidden in most circumstances- check with your licenser or registrar.

There must be a cushioned surface under all outside play equipment that present a fall hazard. Surfacing may not include concrete, asphalt, grass or hard compacted dirt. (Does not apply to public playgrounds).

OSHA regulations may apply to workers performing inspections. A PPE assessment must be completed for playground inspections and the appropriate PPE identified must be provided at no cost to the employee with training for proper use. A sharps container and nitrile gloves must also be provided if they have potential exposure to sharps that they must dispose of along with an exposure control plan. If other drug paraphernalia is found, contact authorities who can safely dispose of substance(s).

Best Practices for Playground Safety

- Review safety precautions and rules with children routinely.
- Have a monitoring strategy and enough monitors to be able to watch all areas of play.
- Separate play areas for different age groups.
- Limit the number of children in different areas.

For more information and resources visit:

www.cseany.org/safety



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