

Keeping Playground & Fitness Equipment Safe

While playgrounds are great resources for younger students to burn off energy and fitness equipment can help older students to develop healthy habits, the equipment can harbor hidden hazards that put student’s well-being at risk. The following are items to take note of while supervising students who are using play structures and fitness equipment, along with a checklist, that will allow all staff members to conduct daily/weekly inspections of your school’s facilities.

Proper Signage

- ❖ All playground equipment should have proper signage posted and well maintained.
- ❖ Signage should be available for the following topics:
 - 1-Manufacturer information; 2-Age recommendation for use; 3-Installation over hard surfaces; 4-Supervision requirement; 5-Warning of helmet and clothing hazards.



Use Zone

- ❖ The use-zone is 6 feet around any piece of equipment.
- ❖ The use-zone must be kept clear of movable toys, bicycles, tricycles, other types of play items, or any debris, other objects, equipment or hazards.

Protective Surfacing

- ❖ It is important to understand what type of fall protection surfacing your school has and to note any problems with the surfacing. Fall protection can come in a multitude of variants.
- ❖ Loose fill (i.e. wood chips) should be kept in the use area and should be maintained at a sufficient depth in the Use Zone. Unitary surfacing (pour-in-place, mats) should be checked for holes or other types of damage.



Damaged Equipment

- ❖ All sections of structures must be examined for damage and foreign objects. This can include: cracks to the plastic, warping of plastic, wood splinters, missing bolts/fasteners, rust, trash on platforms, etc.
- ❖ All damaged equipment must be reported to supervisors who will determine if a work order needs to be placed to repair/replace the equipment. Broken equipment shall be placed out of service until repairs can be made.

Equipment Safety Checklist

	<u>Y/N</u>		<u>Y/N</u>
Signage Present		Movable equipment/debris in use zone	
Loose Surfacing maintained in use zone		Trash or debris in use zone	
Damage to unitary surfacing		Worn chains/fasteners/"S" hooks on swings	
Damaged equipment		Animal droppings/insects	