

## Safety First, Fun for All: Playground Best Practices

A safe, well-kept playground isn't just a nice amenity—it's an important way to keep everyone in the community safe. Warmer weather and the end of the school year bring increased playground use, along with a higher risk of injuries. Consistent inspections, proactive maintenance, and trained staff are essential to keeping play spaces safe, fun, and compliant.

**1**

**Inspections:** Don't inspect from the truck! Get on the playground and interact with the equipment as children do—twist, pull, shake, and climb. Conduct frequent documented inspections to identify hazards like broken equipment, loose bolts, or worn surfacing. Frequency may vary by usage, but high-traffic areas should be checked more often. Refer to the frequency best practices and inspection checklists in the [CPSC Public Playground Safety Handbook](#).



**2**

**Maintenance:** Addressing small issues early helps prevent major safety hazards and costly repairs. Ensure all hardware, moving parts, and fasteners are in good working condition. Plan and budget for routine, preventive maintenance, promptly replacing or removing damaged components from service. Keep detailed records of inspections, repairs, replacements, and all maintenance activities.



**3**

**Protective Surfacing:** Falls are the leading cause of playground injuries, and proper surfacing is critical to reducing the risk of serious head injuries. Maintain adequate depth and coverage of impact-absorbing materials, especially in high-use areas like swings and slide exits.

**4**

**Signage:** Rules and warning signs should be visibly placed near or on playground equipment and should, at a minimum, include information on the age-appropriateness of equipment and that adult supervision of children is recommended. Include phone numbers to report damage to equipment.



**5**

**Make Safety a Shared Priority:** Create a culture of safety by engaging not just maintenance crews, but supervisors, volunteers, and even the public. Encourage playground users to report concerns and respond promptly to all feedback.

### LEARN MORE WITH THESE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- [National Program for Playground Safety](#)
- [CPSC Public Playground Safety Checklist](#)
- [National Safety Council Playground Safety](#)
- Texas Department of State Health Services Playground Safety – [Public Health Sanitation Program](#)
- National Recreation and Parks Association - [Certified Playground Safety Inspector \(CPSI\)](#)