

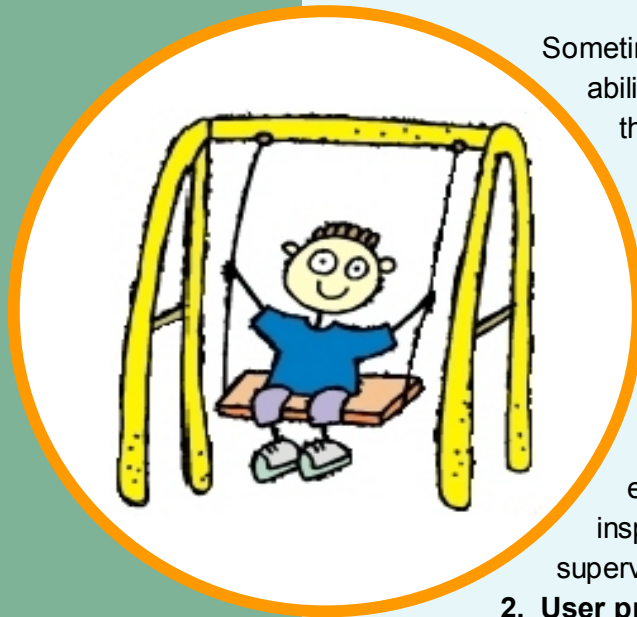
# SAFETY IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

## CHILDREN'S PLAY AREAS

### - IS YOURS SAFE?

As the owner or manager of a premises which has a children's play area, you have a responsibility to ensure the play area you provide is safe.

### WHAT CAUSES ACCIDENTS?



Sometimes children over estimate their abilities and accidents happen. However the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) has noted certain factors which can lead to accidents:

#### **1. Management failures**

E.g. Incorrect design and layout, unsuitable equipment for the age of the children, poorly designed equipment, incorrect installation, poor inspection and maintenance, and poor supervision.

#### **2. User problems**

E.g. Lack of supervision, equipment misuse, unsuitable clothes or poor weather conditions.

#### **RISK ASSESSMENT:**

All providers of play equipment should carry out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment to ensure its ongoing safety. Maintenance is an important factor to consider when undertaking the risk assessment. Routine visual inspections should be carried out to spot damage and other unreported problems such as soiling on the equipment. ROSPA recommend daily routine checks. More thorough intermittent inspections for wear and tear, at frequencies recommended by the manufacturer, are also required.

In addition, an independent specialist should carry out an **annual inspection** for long term safety of the equipment.

**More advice overleaf →**



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## EQUIPMENT

- New outdoor equipment should comply with EN1176 (or EN1177 for surfacing). At the moment there are no British Standards for indoor play equipment.
- For old equipment and indoor play areas, a risk assessment should be undertaken.
- When indoor and outdoor equipment is installed it should have a post installation inspection by a specialist prior to use.
- It is important that any damaged equipment is repaired promptly or taken out of action.

## TRAINING AND SUPERVISION

- All staff must be adequately trained. Good management controls should ensure that the premises are run safely. Staff training should cover how to undertake maintenance checks, supervision of the play areas, emergency procedures and first aid.
- Supervision should be based on the risk assessment undertaken – this may involve activities ranging from regular checks on the area, to continuous presence by a trained member of staff.

## RULES OF PLAY AND SIGNAGE

- Carers should be made aware they are responsible for supervising their own child.
- Where the risk assessment has identified that only children above a specified height should use certain pieces of equipment, this should be clearly indicated by good signage.
- Other rules of play such as removing shoes should be considered.

## ACCIDENT REPORTING AND FIRST AID

- If employees or a self-employed person working on your premises are involved in an accident connected with work it may need to be reported. If a member of the public is taken to hospital due to an accident at your workplace, it may also need to be reported. This can be done by contacting the **Incident Contact Centre**:

**Tel:** 0845 300 9923 **Fax:** 0845 300 9924 **Online:** [www.riddor.gov.uk](http://www.riddor.gov.uk) **E-mail:** [riddor@natbrit.com](mailto:riddor@natbrit.com)

**Post:** Incident Contact Centre, Caerphilly Business Park, Caerphilly, CF83 3GG

- In the unfortunate event of an injury or emergency you should ensure that there is an appointed person to take charge of the situation and that there is a first aid kit available. You may also wish to consider 'first aid for children' training.

## SPECIALIST ADVICE

- ROSPA, the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) and Institute of Leisure and Amenity (ILAM) have specialist inspectors who can undertake annual inspections. ROSPA can also provide on site training.
  - **Useful contacts:**
- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>ILAM:</b> 01491 874 800 | <a href="http://www.ilam.co.uk">www.ilam.co.uk</a>       |
| <b>NPFA</b> 020 7833 5360  | <a href="http://www.npfa.co.uk">www.npfa.co.uk</a>       |
| <b>ROSPA:</b> 0121 248 200 | <a href="http://www.rospace.co.uk">www.rospace.co.uk</a> |

**You can also contact the Health and Safety section of Environmental Health Services for further advice on these issues or any other aspect of health and safety. They are available on:**

**(0113) 24-77791 or [env.health@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:env.health@leeds.gov.uk)**

### **Recommended guidance on children's play areas:**

'Maintaining play facilities in commercial premises' Available from ROSPA (ISBN 0952 4 37090)

'Indoor Play Areas: Guidance on safe practice' Available from ROSPA, NPFA and ILAM (ISBN 1 873 903 758)