



Self-Inspection Tips for Playgrounds

School Health & Safety Program

2022 Update





Background

- The [School Program website](#) includes step-by-step instructions for all inspections
- The Self-Inspection Worksheets were updated for the 2013-2014 school year; they will be updated when OSPI/DOH K-12 Health and Safety Guide revision is completed in 2023



Focusing on Priorities

- The School Program as a whole has been focused on risks and hazards for years
- The focus of the Self-Inspection Worksheets was narrowed in the 2013-14 school year to the hazards or priorities based on inspection data and input



Self-Inspection Worksheets

	N-009.3	CPSC 2.4.2.2 Table 2 ASTM 13.2.1	Depth of resilient surfacing should be at least 9 inches	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
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SPOKANE REGIONAL HEALTH DISTRICT
SCHOOL HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDE
Self-Inspection Worksheet

School: _____
 Address: _____
 Inspection Date: _____
 Inspector: _____

Playgrounds
 Please review this worksheet in its entirety and apply all applicable recommendations and requirements during the inspection of these areas. Items in bold are required. In some cases, only a few of the items below may be relevant. Please note any issues that need to be addressed or corrected in the *Comments/Observations* section of the worksheet and include the location and status if known. Item and page numbers are taken from the DOH/OSPI Health & Safety Guide for K-12 Schools in Washington. Several page numbers are in ASTM F1487-11 and/or the CPSC *Public Playground Safety Handbook*.

Item No.	Page No.	Requirement/Recommendation	In Compliance?	Comments/Observations (If NO is checked explain below)
N-003		New playground plans must be reviewed by Health District before the equipment or surfacing is installed	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
N-004		Written supervision policy should be in place (including playground emergencies, selecting & training supervisors, limiting use during bad weather, etc.) Reference K-12 Guide: N-006 for more information	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
N-007		Written playground rules should be posted at school, taught to students & sent to parents	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
N-001.5	CPSC 2.2.6	On-site visual supervision should be present	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
N-015	CPSC 3.2.1	Children should not wear drawstrings, jewelry, etc.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
N-010	40 CPSC 4.1	School/district maintenance should have a comprehensive inspection program	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
N-013	41	Procedures should be in place to address playground hazards	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
N-001.7	CPSC 3.6	Playgrounds should have proper drainage, be free of tripping hazards & other hazards (broken glass, etc.)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
N-001.8	CPSC 3.6	Playgrounds should not have exposed footings	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
N-001.9	CPSC 3.5 ASTM 9.8.4.1	Playgrounds should not have overhead obstructions (cables, branches, etc.) less than 7' from play surface	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	

List All Changes
 (If NO is checked in the previous column, provide item numbers (e.g. N-001.14) for remaining items and list changes or plans for correction)

Revised 10-2014

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Self-Inspection Worksheets

- Items in **BOLD** are required
- The worksheets were streamlined to half the original size so schools shouldn't need to use the N/A box very often
- Every item on the worksheets was given the designation of priority* so look at each item carefully
- Don't draw a line down the N/A column and hand in your worksheets!

*Priority items could pose an imminent health or safety risk



Things to Remember

- Self-Inspections are most successful when everyone participates
 - Involve school staff and custodians in the inspection process **early** in the school year
- Start delegating self-inspection duties right away and integrate the inspection process into normal duties performed by school staff



Playground Injuries

Playground injuries involving the ER in the US:

- 220,000 playground related injuries annually
- 75% occur on public playgrounds
- 83% are between the ages of 2 to 9 years of age
- 79% of injuries are caused by falls
 - 68% are falls to the surface
 - 10% are falls to other parts of the equipment

Sources: [CDC Playground Injuries Fact Sheet](#) and [CPSC Special Study: Injuries and Deaths Associated with Children's Playground Equipment](#)



Playground Injuries

Major causes of death and serious injury:

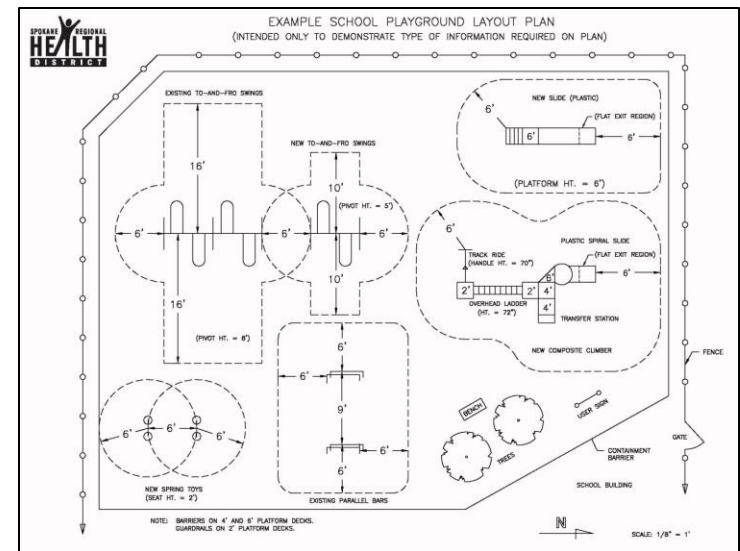
- Entanglement of clothing, strings, or ropes
- Falls onto hard surfaces under playground equipment
- Head and neck entrapment in equipment openings
- Impact injuries from tipped or loose equipment, or moving swings



Playground Injuries

Factors that contribute to playground injuries:

- Improper use or poor supervision
- Poor maintenance
- Installation errors
- Site planning issues





Playground Inspection Tips

- Dig into the surfacing in several places to make sure it is at least 9 inches deep for loose-fill surfacing



- Develop and post written playground rules. Rules should include appropriate ages (e.g., 2-5 years old or 5-12 years old)



Playground Inspection Tips

- Check equipment for dry rot, split boards, cracked plastic parts, worn chains, missing connectors, etc.





Playground Hazard Examples

- Trenching under swings
- Exposed fabric under resilient surfacing
- Exposed footings





Playground Hazard Examples

- **Head entrapment**

Children's heads are larger than their torsos and they may enter openings feet first. When the small torso template fits through an opening but the large head template does not, a head entrapment hazard is created.

- **String entanglement**

Gaps in equipment (e.g., at top of slides) create string entanglement hazards.





Playground Hazard Examples

- Open S-hook (creates a string entanglement)
- Worn chain
- Unanchored soccer goal (can fall on child)





Noting Playground Corrections

Remember to complete this section of self-inspection worksheet:

	Review Issues From Prior Inspection(s)	Are All Identified Issues Corrected?	List <u>All</u> Changes (If NO is checked in the previous column, provide item numbers (e.g. N-001.14) for remaining items and list changes or plans for correction)
Corrections	Review the previous routine and re-inspection. Document all changes and plans to correct previously identified playground issues or hazards (e.g., entanglements, entrapments, protrusions, surfacing depth).	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	



Playground Plan Review

- Plan review is required for **all** new playground equipment **before** installation or relocation of existing equipment <https://srhd.org/cards-permits-inspections/school-submits-playground-proposal-to-health-district/step-1>
- Playground standards:
 - ASTM F-1487-21 – “Its purpose is to reduce life-threatening and debilitating injuries”
 - CPSC *Public Playground Safety Handbook* – Its purpose is to reduce “playground related deaths and injuries”



Have a safe and healthy school year!

Contact the School Health & Safety Program with any questions at livingenvironment@srhd.org or 509.324.1560, ext. 4

Thank you!



School Health & Safety Program