# CFA/PIRG Playground Safety Survey -- Spring 2002

Playground Name: _____ Location (cross streets): _____

City/State: _____ Date Surveyed: _____

Surveyor/Organization/Phone Number: _____

NOTE: Please make as many copies of this survey as you have playgrounds to check; complete a separate survey for each playground. You will need a measuring tape and a strong stick (to dig to the bottom of loose-fill surfaces) to complete this survey. As necessary, please continue your comments on the reverse side.

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## 1. PROTECTIVE SURFACING

It is extremely important to note what the surface is under and around play equipment. If the surfacing type varies (i.e., there is more than one surface on the playground), please note what type of surface is under each piece of play equipment. For example, you may find concrete under a climber but hardwood chips under the swings.

a. What type of surfacing is under and around the play equipment? Please circle.

Concrete Asphalt Grass Soil

Loose-fill materials: Hardwood Chips Shredded Mulch Sand Pea Gravel Shredded Tires

Rubber Tiles or Unitary Synthetic Surface

Other: _____

b. If the surfacing is a loose material, such as hardwood chips, shredded mulch, sand, pea gravel or shredded tires, use your yardstick or ruler to measure how deep it is, making several measurements in different spots.

Depth (at deepest point):_____inches Does this depth appear consistent throughout the play area? YES NO

Comments: _____

## 2. FALL (USE) ZONES

The fall or use zone is the area under and around a piece of play equipment where a child might fall. The fall zone should (1) have protective surfacing and (2) be free of other equipment or obstacles onto which a child might fall. Protective surfacing is covered above; the questions below address whether the area around the equipment that is free of obstacles and other equipment provides a large enough fall zone. If the fall zone is large enough (as described below) but does not have adequate protective surfacing (i.e., hardwood chips are only 3 inches deep), please note that problem above and/or below.

a. *Fall Zone for climbing equipment and slides*: does the fall zone extend a minimum of 6 feet in all directions from the perimeter of the equipment? YES NO

AND, if the height of adjacent pieces of equipment (such as an independent climber and an indepement slide) exceeds 30 inches, is the minimum distance between the two separate pieces at least 9 feet? YES NO

b. *Fall Zone for swings with conventional, strap-type seats (not tot seats):* Does the fall zone extend a minimum of 6 feet from the perimeter of the support structure on each side as well as a minimum distance of twice the height of the pivot point in front of and behind the swing seats? The fall zone on the sides of a swing structure may overlap with that of an adjacent swing structure (minimum 6 ft. spacing). YES NO

Comments: _____

Playground Name/ Location:_____

## 3. PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT SURFACE MATERIAL

a. Is there any peeling, chipping or cracking paint on any equipment surface? YES NO

b. Is playground equipment made of wood other than red wood (reddish) or cedar (silvery gray)? YES NO

## 4. EQUIPMENT HEIGHT

Limiting the height of play equipment is an essential means of preventing severe fall-related injuries.

a. *Climbing equipment:* what is the height of the highest climbing member, such as a rung or platform? _____

b. *Slides:* what is the height of the slide entrance where the child enters the slide chute? _____

c. *Swings:* is the height of the pivot point/swing beam higher than 8 feet? YES NO

## 5. SWINGS

a. Are any swing seats constructed of heavy, rigid materials such as wood or metal? YES NO

b. Are any swing structures attached to other play equipment, such as a slide or climber? YES NO

c. Are there more than two swing seats in any one section (bay) of the swing structure? YES NO

d. Are infant/tot seats suspended in the same section (bay) of the swing structure as regular seats? YES NO

e. Is the horizontal distance between adjacent swings at least 24 inches? YES NO

f. Is the horizontal distance between the swing seat and any adjacent support structure at least 30 inches? YES NO

## 6. HEAD ENTRAPMENT HAZARDS

Any opening -- except those where the ground is the lower boundary -- with an interior dimension between 3.5 and 9 inches may cause head entrapment, and such incidents can result in strangulation. Entrapment may occur when a child enters an opening, either head first or feet first, but cannot withdraw his or her head because the opening is too small. For example, on a piece of climbing equipment, the space between two climbing rungs on a ladder or the space between the lower edge of a protective barrier and the platform may present head entrapment hazards if the opening is in the hazardous range between 3.5 and 9 inches. Head entrapment criteria apply to all types of openings on all types of equipment, except where the ground is the lower boundary of the opening.

Does the play equipment have any openings with an interior dimension between 3.5 and 9 inches which may cause head entrapment? If yes, please describe below. YES NO

Comments: _____

## 7. CLOTHING ENTANGLEMENT HAZARDS

Entanglement incidents can result in strangulation. Look for open "S" hooks, especially on swings. Look for gaps, protrusions, or equipment components which may act as hooks or catch points, especially at the top of slides.

Does the play equipment have any entanglement hazards on which children may catch clothing or anything else around their neck? YES NO

Comments: _____

## 8. DANGEROUS EQUIPMENT -- Does the playground have any of the following equipment?

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. | Chain or Cable Walks | YES | NO | d. | Swinging Exercise Rings/Trapeze Bars | YES | NO |
| b. | Multiple Occupancy Swings/Gliders | YES | NO | e. | Rope Swings (Tire Swings are exempt) | YES | NO |
| c. | Animal Swings | YES | NO | f. | Individual Climbing Ropes | YES | NO |