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# Playground Safety NEWS

Fall 2002

KEEPING kids SAFE

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## Playground Safety NEWS

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- National Playground Safety Week 2003 April 21-25
- Look What's Happening! Elkhart Lake success. "It was a great day!"
- Are you supervising your children? Take our quiz on page 2 to find out!

**Mark your calendar!**  
 Upcoming events related to playground safety you won't want to miss.

**JANUARY 7-10, 2003**  
 Hawaii International Conference on Education, Honolulu, HI  
[www.hiceducation.org](http://www.hiceducation.org)  
 or at 808-947-7187

**MARCH 13-15, 2003**  
 Southern Early Childhood Association, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina  
[www.SouthernEarlyChildhood.org](http://www.SouthernEarlyChildhood.org) or at 501-221-1648

**FEBRUARY 12-15, 2003**  
 Southwest American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance, Reno, Nevada (SWAAHPERD)  
[www.aahperd.org/districts/swd](http://www.aahperd.org/districts/swd)

**APRIL 1-5, 2003**  
 AAHPERD National Convention & Exposition, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
[www.aahperd.org](http://www.aahperd.org) 800-213-7193 x 401

**APRIL 4-8, 2003**  
 National School Board, San Francisco, CA  
[www.nsba.org](http://www.nsba.org) or at 800-950-6722

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**NPPS, housed at University of Northern Iowa received a continuum of their grant for two more years!** The grant is from the Department of Health and Human Services through the Centers for Disease Control and Injury Prevention (CDC). As we enter the 8th year, we want to thank CDC for their continued support and assistance! This year grant funds are earmarked for NPPS to go back and visit the nation's playgrounds. During the next two years, NPPS will be conducting a follow-up survey of America's playgrounds. The survey instrument will again look at issues of SAFE: Supervision, Age Appropriate Developmental Design, Falls to the Surface and Equipment and Surface Maintenance.

In the original study done in 1998-2000, the overall grade for public playgrounds in the United States was a C. The study concluded that America's children are at

potential risk while at play, particularly in regard to two of the lowest scoring (F's) elements of the study, supervision and age-appropriate design. However, as Dr. Donna Thompson, Director of NPPS has noted, "Since that original study, more and more people have become aware of the need to match children to appropriate equipment. In addition, we now notice more signs being placed on playgrounds indicating that children should always be supervised and directing adults to appropriate play equipment for children. It is hoped that this new study will indicate progress toward safer play environments for children. After all, every child should be able to play on an A playground!"

The results of this new study will be revealed during National Playground Safety Week in 2004. Each state will again get its individual report card.

**SIGN UP NOW**

**National Playground Safety Week 2003 will be the week of April 21-25.** Click on to NPPS's web site at [http://www.uni.edu/playground/safety\\_week.html](http://www.uni.edu/playground/safety_week.html) to get ideas for the week! Stay tuned for further information...

**2003 NPPS SAFETY SCHOOL:** Session One: **August 6-9** Session Two: **August 11-14**

Join us in August for our Playground Safety School where you will review playground safety issues, learn to plan and design areas for safe play, and discover ways to affect change in your communities. You may also select to receive your SAFE certification!

The schools are held on the University of Northern Iowa campus in Cedar Falls, IA. Sign up now to attend! **To learn more about NPPS Safety School, visit our web site at <http://www.uni.edu/playground/school.html>.**

**Recent articles by NPPS staff**

Thompson, D. & Hudson, S. (2002) "Playgrounds" in Facilities Planning for Physical Activity and Sport. 10th ed. T. Sawyer, ed., Sagamore Publishing. pp. 239-254.

Olsen, H., Hudson, S. & Thompson, D. (August 2002) "Child's Play" American School Board Journal. Vol. 180, No. 8, pp. 22-24.

Thompson, D., Hudson, S. & Olsen, H. (Spring 2002) "Using Math to Solve Playground Safety Problems." Iowa Math. Vol. 29, pp 29-35.



Does your playground make the grade? Evaluate the risk factors in your playground by using NPPS's Safety Report Card. **Please download a copy at [www.uni.edu/playground/report.html](http://www.uni.edu/playground/report.html) or call us at 800-554-PLAY.**

**Help us make sure that all states have made progress toward safer playgrounds for our nation's children!**

HEY KIDS! CHECK OUT NPPS KID'S WEB SITE  
[www.kidchecker.org](http://www.kidchecker.org)

# LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING!

## THERE IS NO STOPPING THE GREATER ELKHART LAKE KIDS COALITION!

Lori Baus, **one** of the dedicated parents at Elkhart Lake in Wisconsin writes, *"The playground project has developed into something both more exciting and more challenging than we could have imagined! The hard work, dedication, and the smiles have made this effort worth every minute!"*

It all started in the fall of 1999 with a flyer posted on the bulletin board in the children's section of the local library. "Interested in forming a play group for younger children? Contact Julie at..." That flyer brought together five mothers and their children. We began meeting weekly at local parks, beaches and backyards. We formally adopted a mission statement and named ourselves The Greater Elkhart Lake Kids Coalition. We attended numerous city meetings and formed partnerships with several community groups.

Research, community involvement, fundraising, publicity, tax-deductible donations, flexibility, patience and hard work were key reasons why the project was a hit. We researched everything from the different types of equipment to what children are like and what they wish to have in their park. **We raised over \$80,000** for our project through holiday bake sales, t-shirt sales, a Halloween party, brick sales, a silent auction, and direct mail campaigns. It was so exciting to have Governor Scott McCallum's office send a representative to speak on his behalf to declare the week of April 23-27, 2002 as National

Playground Safety Week.

The reality came on May 2002 when 50 volunteers showed up to help install the equipment. The playground was installed near the city's library. "It was a great day!" There has been positive feedback from the community. In fact, one of the librarians indicated that the number of people coming to the library has doubled since the playground has been installed.

Lori writes, "The past two years have been difficult times. Each hour we spent on this project was an hour away

**"It was a great day!"**

from our families. We care about this community! Therefore, we think it was well worth our time and effort!"

**Never doubt that a small group of thoughtfully committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.**

*Margaret Mead*

**ANDREW KIDD APPEARS ON THE JOHN WALSH SHOW**  
Kudos to Andrew Kidd for talking about playground safety on the John Walsh show on October 15th.

### INCORPORATING TECHNOLOGY INTO PLAYGROUND SAFETY CURRICULUM

The Iowa Playground Safety Network offered a playground safety course on the ICN. The class was available at 19 different locations throughout the state of Iowa. *Thanks to the IPSN for advocating playground safety by the use of technology.*



# FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Supervisors play an important role in ensuring the safety of children in the environment. Good supervision can help prevent needless injuries. NPPS has created a Supervision Kit that will help playground supervisors learn the techniques of Safe Supervision. The kit includes a training manual outlining the ABC's of Safe Supervision, a video, and a supervision fanny pack. The video, "Safe Playground Supervision," is designed for people who supervise playgrounds at schools, childcare centers, or as part of after school and recreation programs.

The video demonstrates the proper techniques—Anticipation, Behavior and Context—to use when supervising children on a playground. Also included are interviews with school administrators and staff, a childcare director and two experts from the National Program for Playground Safety. The manual gives an in-depth description of Anticipating the potential hazards, monitoring the children's Behaviors, and assessing the Context or environment. It is a must for people involved in playground supervision and training.

If you are a childcare provider, school principal, school nurse, administrator, a board member, a parent/teacher organization, or a playground supervisor, this kit is for you! **CALL NOW FOR YOUR COPY OF THE SAFE SUPERVISION KIT!** The cost for the kit is \$155.00, which includes shipping and handling. Log on to learn more at

[www.playgroundsupervision.org](http://www.playgroundsupervision.org) or call us at **800-554-7529**.

**Looking for ADA RESOURCES ON SALE NOW! GET YOUR CD ROMs!**



NPPS had great success with the *Applying CPSC Guidelines for the Development of SAFE Playgrounds!* They have now created a CD ROM called *Planning Accessible Safe*

*Playgrounds Using the Americans With Disabilities Act.* For the past several months, NPPS has listened to the many questions about the new ADA guidelines for playgrounds. In response, we created a CD ROM that can be used as a self-paced pictorial guide covering all the elements of the ADA requirements. It offers a clear explanation of the ADA standards for playgrounds. **The CD ROM is available for \$25.00 by ordering on-line at [www.playgroundsafety.org](http://www.playgroundsafety.org) or at 800-554-7529.**

Don't forget about NPPS's CD ROM, *Applying CPSC Guidelines for the Development of SAFE Playgrounds.*

**SAVE \$\$\$ when you buy 2 CDs!**  
**2 CD ROMs = \$40.00**



## SUN PRAIRIE HOST FIRST SUPERVISION WORKSHOP!

The Sun Prairie School District in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin was the first group to call upon NPPS to provide their playground supervisors with the new supervision training workshop. The workshop is based on the information found in the new Supervision Kit and the experience of the NPPS trainers.

Dr. Susan Hudson, Education Director, commented, *"We had an enthusiastic and dedicated group who provided good insight into the supervision process throughout the workshop. It was apparent that Sun Prairie School District has recognized the importance of having trained playground supervisors and is working hard to ensure the safety of all the children in their schools."*

Workshops are offered on a half-day or full day basis. A minimum of 20 people and maximum of 50 is required. For further information concerning supervision training workshops in your area call NPPS at **800-554-PLAY**.

# LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING!

We'd love to hear what's happening in your area to promote playground safety. Just complete this form, attach your news and mail to: NPPS, School of HPELS, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA, 50614-0618 or [playground-safety@uni.edu](mailto:playground-safety@uni.edu). Watch for your submission in upcoming issues! **Please notify NPPS of any address changes with this form as well.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Fax ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

My address has changed. Please update your records.