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## Nominate that special someone for the 2005 Playground Safety Advocate of the Year Award!

NPPS would like to recognize individuals for their dedication to making children safe on playgrounds by awarding someone as this year's **Playground Safety Advocate of the Year!** If you know someone that is helping keep our nation's playgrounds safe or someone that has made a difference with your playground, then nominate that person for NPPS's 2005 Playground Safety Advocate of the Year! You can nominate that person at <http://www.uni.edu/playground/advocate.html>.

## Mark your calendar!

Upcoming events related to playground safety you won't want to miss.

### FEBRUARY 24-26

National AfterSchool Association  
[www.naaconference.org](http://www.naaconference.org)

### MARCH 2-5

National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers (NCCCC)  
[www.campuschildren.org](http://www.campuschildren.org)

### MARCH 3-5

Southern Early Childhood Association  
[www.SouthernEarlyChildhood.org](http://www.SouthernEarlyChildhood.org)

### MARCH 5-6

California Association for the Education of Young Children

### MARCH 17-20

National Child Care Association

### APRIL 12-16

American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance  
[www.aahperd.org](http://www.aahperd.org)

### APRIL 16-19

National School Board Association  
[www.nsba.org](http://www.nsba.org)

### APRIL 25-29

National Playground Safety Week  
[www.playgroundsafety.org](http://www.playgroundsafety.org)

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### Recent articles by NPPS staff

Hudson, S., Thompson, D. and Olsen, H. (January, 2005). How safe are school and park playgrounds? *JOPERD*, 76, 1 pp. 16-20.

Hudson, S., Thompson, D., Olsen, H. (April, 2004). How safe are U.S. playgrounds? *Parks and Recreation*, Vol. 39, No. 4. pp. 52-59.

Hudson, S., Thompson, D., Olsen, H. (Nov/Dec, 2004). Danger: Children at play. Assessing the increasing risk factors of public playgrounds. *Public Risk*, Vol. 19, No. 10, pp. 12-16.

National Program for Playground Safety (Oct., 2004). Iowa safe surfacing initiative refunded for 2004. *Landscape Architect*.

## NATIONAL PLAYGROUND SAFETY WEEK

APRIL 25-29, 2005

**PLAY S.A.F.E. PROMISE!**

The annual celebration of National Playground Safety Week starts April 25, 2005. This year NPPS is launching a "**Play S.A.F.E. Promise**" campaign for National Playground Safety Week. We want to hear from children and agencies that have promised to help us keep play areas safe for children.

Children, we encourage you to **promise to play safe on the playground.**

School and child care Agencies, we encourage you to **promise to provide safe play environments for children.**

*In April, you will be able to log into our new website at [www.playgroundsafetyweek.org](http://www.playgroundsafetyweek.org) and tell NPPS how you are fulfilling your promise!*

It is very appropriate for schools, child care centers, and other youth serving organizations (Boy/Girl Scouts, 4-H Clubs, etc) to join with the National Program for Playground Safety to promote "Play S.A.F.E. Promise!" This is a great opportunity for parents, caregivers, and teachers to focus on teaching children about the importance of playing safe on playgrounds.

### Write letters to your Governor

We also invite you to help us persuade the governor in your state to declare April 25-29, 2005, as National Playground Safety Week. We have contacted all 50 state governors asking them to celebrate Playground Safety by signing a proclamation. This proclamation allows the state to show their support in the promotion of safe playground environments for the children. We need your help because many states require a state resident to initiate the proclamation process. To follow along to see if your state has joined in our efforts, you can view the proclamations on the World Wide Web at [www.playgroundsafetyweek.org](http://www.playgroundsafetyweek.org) and click on proclamations.

This is your chance to have a voice in making America's playgrounds safe! [www.playgroundsafetyweek.org](http://www.playgroundsafetyweek.org)



### What is National Playground Safety Week?

- \* A time to focus on children's outdoor play environments.
- \* A time to pledge to use good judgment when playing.
- \* A time for gratitude for all the adults who work tirelessly on maintaining our playgrounds.

### Play S.A.F.E. Promise ACTIVITIES

- \* Talk with children about the importance of playground safety.
- \* Help children become a Kid Checker by using NPPS Kid Checker program.

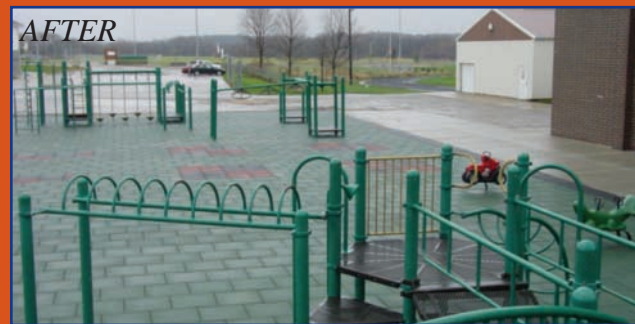
[www.kidchecker.org](http://www.kidchecker.org)

- \* For preschool children, show them NPPS's Sammy's Playground Pointers.
- \* Check for safety using NPPS Lesson Plans. Call to get your copy of the Lesson Plans.
- \* Implement Slyde's Play Safe, Play Smart program.

[www.playgroundhound.com/teachersguide.html](http://www.playgroundhound.com/teachersguide.html)

# LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING!

## LAKEVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SUCCESS PROJECT



Karen Sherman, a dedicated parent at Lakeview Elementary School, writes, "When my son started kindergarten at Lakeview Elementary in Solon, Iowa in 2002, I was very impressed with every aspect of the school. The school has top-of-the-line technology, bright large classrooms, and plenty of room to play at recess. The only thing that wasn't top notch was the playground surface. The school had nice equipment but it had pea gravel as the surface. As you can see in the before picture, drainage was an enormous problem for us. In addition, Lakeview also has 16 permanently disabled students that could not get on the playground due to the pea gravel.

I had seen a synthetic surface before, so I knew that it was possible to have an accessible surface material. I kept thinking about it and that spring I asked the school principal how she would feel about a solid rubber surface and if she would like me to raise the money. She immediately responded with an enthusiastic, "That would be wonderful!"

In the summer, I started researching different rubber surfaces available and prices. When school started that August, I went to the school board to get their support. I then recruited three other moms and we started Lakeview Project Playground. I was counting on the surface to cost about \$50,000 with an additional \$10,000 for any extra cost.

**Finding the money in a community of 5,000 people**  
Our committee realized we did not have a clue on how to fundraise. We called on a school board member that had a lot of fundraising experience to give us a short course on how to go about it. He encouraged us to have 20% of the money raised before we went to the community. We created a power point presentation that we presented to the PTO. Our hope was to get \$5,000 from the PTO. They were so excited and impressed that they gave us \$10,000. Then, we slowly received donations from community groups: Optimist Club, Solon Beef Day, local utilities, and others.

At about the same time, the National Program for Playground Safety received funding from the Iowa legislatures to fund the Iowa Safe Surfacing Initiative (ISSI). We applied to be a part of this Initiative. We were thrilled to find out that the grant required us to use safety rubber tiles that are manufactured by an Iowa based company. The grant would cover about one third of our playground area.

By the beginning of May 2004, we had raised about \$20,000. After our campaign was published on the cover of our local paper, we had a parent donate \$10,000 and many other parents, grandparents, and community members made donations.

**Construction**  
With a deadline of Fall 2004 looming, we had to work fast to raise the rest of the money. We had a raffle to win a night's stay at a popular Wisconsin indoor waterpark that sold for \$25, raising over \$3,000.

Construction started in October and on November 1st, 2004 we had our Grand Opening! We had raised over \$100,000 for the new surface. The surface is wonderful – it is so soft and spongy. The first day the kids were allowed to play on it, they would intentionally fall down, jump up and announce "I didn't get hurt!"

**Superior effort, Lakeview Elementary School! Thank you, Karen and the community of Solon, IA for helping us keep kids SAFE on America's playgrounds! NPPS is extremely proud to support a community striving to have a safe, accessible playground!**

*Kudos to NPPS for being named American Association for Leisure and Recreation (Friends of Recreation) for all the work on behalf of children in America.*

## NPPS Teams Up with Other Organizations to Spread the **SAFE** Message.

NPPS together with its SAFE partners BCI Burke, Play Matta, Slyde: The Playground Hound, Sof'Fall, and Today's Playgrounds to create an in-school program called **Play Smart Play Safe!** The SAFE partners are launching this educational program with Lifetime Learning Systems, Inc., a division of Weekly Reader. The focus of this program is for Kindergarten students and their families to learn about playground safety. The program objectives include:

- Raising awareness of playground safety by teaching them to avoid some of the most common and potentially dangerous playground safety hazards.
- Providing educators and families of the children they serve with resource information for creating safe play environments and preventing life-threatening playground injuries.

- Providing activities and lessons that can be used in celebration of National Playground Safety Week.

Watch for **Play Smart Play Safe** to appear in Weekly Reader this Spring. To learn more you can visit [www.playgroundhound.com/teachersguide.html](http://www.playgroundhound.com/teachersguide.html)

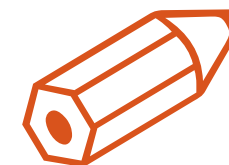
## Another year of Funding for NPPS!



Iowa Senator Tom Harkin was successful in securing \$300,000 for the University of Northern Iowa, National Program for Playground Safety in the FY 2005 Omnibus Appropriations Bill. The money will be used to research playground accidents and help school districts make their playgrounds safe.

Harkin secured the funds as ranking Democrat of Senate Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations subcommittee. "The best way to ensure a prosperous future for Iowa communities is to provide all of our kids with the best possible education," Harkin said. "By making sure that all of our students are prepared for a 21st Century economy, we secure a bright future for our children and for cities and towns all over Iowa. This funding is a big win for Iowa and I am happy this funding will allow the Center to move forward."

### ENROLL IN NPPS SAFETY SCHOOL!



This is a great opportunity to gain more knowledge and understanding of playground safety and design. There will be two sessions. The first session will be held on **August 3-6**. The second session will be held on **August 8-11, 2005**. The schools are held on the University of Northern Iowa campus in Cedar Falls, IA. To learn more about the NPPS Safety School, visit our web site at [www.uni.edu/playground/school.html](http://www.uni.edu/playground/school.html) or call **800-554-PLAY (7529)**.

## 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.