

# NEWSLETTER

## KEEPING KIDS SAFE THROUGH THE SUMMER

- With summer quickly approaching, make sure the kids in your life have a safe season by reviewing playground safety tips.
- For more information on Playground Safety visit our website at [www.playgroundsafety.org](http://www.playgroundsafety.org)
- Playground Safety Week is April 24-28, 2006.

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# The National Program for Playground Safety

America's playgrounds  
Make them safe



APRIL 2006

## Summer Playground Safety Tips

Summer's coming...and that means children at play. From parks, to pools, to backyards, a lot of summer activities involve playgrounds. Here are some helpful playground safety tips to keep the kids in your life safe this summer.

### Survey the Play Area

A quick scan for potential hazards can help avoid injuries while on the playground. Before children are allowed to play, check for obvious safety hazards such as unwanted debris including broken glass, metal, etc. Check over equipment to make sure there are no broken or missing pieces. Children should never be allowed to play on broken equipment. Also, scan the children themselves; strings, bike helmets, and jump ropes are strangulation hazards.

Other not-so-obvious hazards

include standing water and hot equipment. If play equipment is not designed to drain properly, standing water can collect resulting in health concerns as well as an inconvenience. Check at the bottom of slides or in enclosed areas where water can become trapped.

The sun's intense summer rays can cause play equipment to reach dangerously high temperatures. Before allowing children to use equipment, be sure to check the heat of the surfaces. Hot metal and plastic can cause severe burns to young, tender skin.

Finally, if the play area is next to a road, parking lot, body of water, or any other potentially dangerous area for children, be sure fencing is present to keep children away from these hazards.

### Supervision

To ensure children's safety, it is important that supervision is always present. Be an active supervisor, moving and constantly monitoring the children's activities. Children are developmentally different.

Therefore, direct children to equipment designated for their age and developmental abilities. Make sure kids follow the rules of use for a specific play area. If rules are not present, talk to children about appropriate behavior. Always be ready for any situation. Carrying a supervision kit, first aid supplies, and cell phone prepares you to address any situation that may arise.

Finally, remember to enjoy your summer vacation, but don't take a break from safety.

## What is Playground Safety School?



**Playground Safety School**  
Students enjoying the  
playground safety message.

With summer quickly

approaching, it's almost time for Playground Safety School.

Listen to what these Playground Safety School attendees had to say about their experience...

"As a Child Care Nurse Consultant I use the information I learned at Playground Safety School on a daily basis... I feel the skills and knowledge I gained at Playground Safety School are truly impacting the lives of kids in my community, now and for the future."

Analisa Pearson, RN, BSN  
Child Care Nurse Consultant

"Anyone who is interested in truly understanding the elements of playground safety should attend this course. The instructors are phenomenal, the quality of the educational material is exceptional, and you will leave the Institute armed with a special knowledge base that will give you the credibility and confidence needed when addressing the public regarding playground safety."

DeLenny Roca-Dominguez  
Administrator, Injury Free  
Coalition for Kids

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## What is Playground Safety School...Continued



Safety school participants examine play equipment at a local child care center.

Playground Safety School is 3 1/2 fun-filled days of learning everything you wanted to know about playground safety, including:

- Reviewing playground safety issues and standards
- Learning to plan and design SAFE play areas
- Learning ways to make a difference in your own community.

- One-on-one consultations with NPPS staff regarding your play area.

Safety School is perfect for school administrators, nurses, child care specialists, risk managers, or anyone who wants children to play on SAFE playgrounds.

Our expert team will provide you with an easy to understand, hands-on learning

experience, which will enable you to return to your community with the knowledge, skills, and resources to be an advocate for playground safety.

This year's Safety School dates are August 1-4, 2006 and August 7-10, 2006. Sign up before July 14 to a discount. For more information visit our website.

*"The instructors are phenomenal, and the quality of the educational material is exceptional ..."*

*A comment on NPPS*

*Safety School by*

*DeLenny Roca-*

*Dominguez*

*Administrator, Injury Free Coalition for Kids*

**"The information from this course will be very useful to all staff members at our center."**

**Online Training Course Participant**

## Keeping Kids Safe in the Summer Sun

Man-made materials are not the only hazard children face on playgrounds. Summer means outdoor fun, but can also mean danger if children are overexposed to harmful UV rays. Follow these easy preventative steps to help keep children safe in the summer sun.

1. Limit children's time in the sun during peak sun intensity hours. This the most affective way to avoid sun damage to skin and eyes. Peak sun intensity hours occur be-

tween 11AM-4PM. By scheduling children's outdoor activities in the early morning or late afternoon you can reduce sun exposure by as much as 60 percent.

2. When exposure to intense sun is unavoidable, be sure to protect young skin with light, loose fitting clothing and sunglasses, Remember to apply sunscreen.

3. Another way of protecting children from sun damage is to make sure adequate shade is available. If natural shade is not

present at your play area, then manufactured shade structures should be installed. When planning special summer outings, plan ahead and make sure parks or field trip sites have adequate shade.

4. Finally always make sure children are consuming plenty of water to stay properly hydrated.

You can monitor the daily UV Index forecast for your area at [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov) or in your local newspaper.

## Product Highlight: Online Trainings

In an attempt to spread the message of playground safety, NPPS now offers online training courses. The first session proved to be highly successful. Participants were very positive about the supervision course.

"This was a GREAT training. I'm so glad that I was notified about it. I look forward to any

other trainings like this one."

Online Training Course Participant

Upcoming course will cover a variety of areas including supervision, assessment, maintenance, age appropriate design, planning an outdoor learning environment, and selecting appropriate surfacing materials. Child care

professionals can enroll today for courses designed for their specific needs. Enjoy the luxury of completing each course at your own pace. For only \$12.50 you can receive a hour of training credit. If you need a CEU credit, there is an additional \$10 processing fee.

For more information visit [www.playgroundsafety.org/online\\_training/index.htm](http://www.playgroundsafety.org/online_training/index.htm)

# Spotlight: Happy Birthday Lawrence Bruya, Playground Safety Advocate



Larry Bruya teaching Playground Safety School participants about the importance of Supervision.

Lawrence Bruya is a long time advocate of playground safety. In honor of a milestone birthday Larry, as he is known by his friends, celebrated this month we would like to recognize his many contributions to playground safety.

Dr. Bruya is a professor at Washington State University and teaches in the College of Education focusing on Movement Studies.

He has previously held positions of associate dean and department chair at WSU. Larry has also worked as a principal in the Alaskan bush, elementary school physical education specialist, classroom teacher, and director of a children's gymnasium and aquatics activity program. Larry has received numerous outstanding educator awards throughout his teaching career. Clearly Larry's resume proves his credibility and knowledge of children and children's activity.

Dr. Bruya has taken his wide knowledge of children and published extensively about child development and playground design. Larry also advocated for safety as a member of the Academic Advisory Board for the National Center for Boundless Playgrounds and a National Program for Playground Safety board member.

Larry has become so passionate about playground safety, that he is taking his knowledge and spreading it worldwide. In 1995, Larry joined the NPPS team for our National Safety School.

"Larry is an energetic and terrific addition to our team and we are very grateful to have him and his expertise on our team of instructors."

Donna Thompson  
Executive Director NPPS

Larry has dedicated his life to enhancing play and safety for children. He is passionate and knowledgeable and has paved the way for many playground safety advocates. For all you have contributed, your hard work, dedication, we applaud you Larry Bruya for you have done and have left to do.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY LARRY!!!**



## Keep Your Children SAFE: A Checklist for Parents

✓  
**Supervision is Present**  
Adult presence is a necessity to assess for potential hazards and to monitor children's play. Potential hazards include strings on clothing or any type of rope used for play. Strings or ropes can cause accidental strangulation if they become entangled in equipment.

✓  
**Age Appropriate Equipment**  
Preschool ages, 2-5 years and 5-12 year-olds are developmentally different and need different equipment located in separate areas to keep the playground safe and fun for all.

✓  
**Falls to Surface are Cushioned**  
Seventy percent of all playground injuries are related to falls to the surface. Acceptable surfaces include hardwood fiber/mulch, pea gravel, sand, rubber mats, poured in place, and tiles. Playground surfaces should not be concrete, asphalt, grass, blacktop, dirt, or rocks.

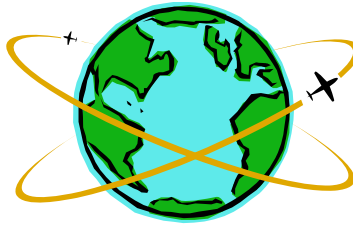
✓  
**Equipment is Safe**  
Make sure equipment is anchored safely in the ground and all equipment pieces are in good working condition. S-hooks should be entirely closed. Bolts should not protruding. There should be no exposed footings. If any equipment looks unsafe or damaged, children should not be on it.

# What we're doing: Spreading the Message

Three words can sum up the last couple of months at The National Program for Playground Safety: travel, travel, travel. We have been busy raising awareness about playground safety and injury prevention worldwide.

Our travels began with Executive Director Donna Thompson, Ph.D. and Education Director Susan Hudson, Ph.D. making a trip to Albuquerque, New Mexico in February. This stop in Albuquerque was to provide a Playground Safety School for the Environmental Health Division of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Following their trip to New Mexico, Donna and Susan were



off to exhibit and provide a workshop at the After School Conference in Louisville, Kentucky. With Susan and Donna traveling, Heather Olsen, Director of Operations, was busy back home teaching elementary education students about playground safety, conducting NPPS's first online training course, and presenting at a child care conference in Iowa.

March brought more spreading

the message of playground safety both nationally and internationally. Our presentation at the National Child Care Association Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada, was a huge success. There were over 60 interested individuals who attended our presentation on assessment. The travel marathon ended with a trip to Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany. Donna and Susan conducted a Safety School for Child Care and After School Providers on the Air Force Base.

If you are interested in NPPS presenting in your area, visit our website or contact us to discuss the possibilities.

## Safety School Coupon

*Early Bird Special*

Register NOW to receive the Discounted Price  
Deadline is July 14, 2006

**\$395**

Includes all sessions and materials, shuttle service, one on one consultation, meals, and 3CEUs

Register online at <http://www.playgroundsafety.org/school/register.htm>

August 1-4, 2006

August 7-10, 2006

National Program for Playground Safety  
(800)554-PLAY or (319)273-PLAY  
playground-safety@uni.edu  
[www.playgroundsafety.org](http://www.playgroundsafety.org)