



## for the Playground

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### Supervision – Behavior and Rules

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Playground supervisors should be aware of children's behavior that may be potentially dangerous to themselves or others so they can respond proactively. Pay attention to the following behaviors:

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- **Risk taking behaviors-** may occur both on and off the equipment. It is important that supervisors establish rules of acceptable use for the equipment and for play. It is normal for children to explore and “push the limits” so supervisors need to keep the risk taking behaviors within safe boundaries. Peer-pressure can often increase dangerous risk taking behavior.

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- **Aggressive behaviors-** Watch for aggressive behavior towards both other children and inanimate objects. Intervening to help the child work through anger or frustration may keep the situation from escalating. Watch for and report any bullying.

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- **Use of equipment-** Encourage children to use the equipment the way it is intended to be used. Discourage pushing, shoving, overcrowding on or around the equipment. Discourage running and playing tag on the equipment as these activities distract the children and often leading to missteps, slips and falls.

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#### Rules

- Develop written rules that promote safety and encourage good behavior. Rules should include general playground safety and rules for the different types of equipment.
- Distribute the rules to everyone involved including the parents/guardians.
- Teach playground rules to the students and post a copy of the rules in the classroom. Review the rules throughout the school year.
- Discuss how good behavior will be rewarded and what the consequences are for not following the rules. Keep the consequences simple.
- Enforce the rules consistently using the school's established discipline system.

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#### Promoting positive playground behavior

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Supervisors can be proactive to ensure that the rules are followed rather than reactive when they are broken. Some ways to promote positive playground behaviors are:

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- To use frequent positive reinforcement and praise
- Remind students of the rules
- Make eye contact with students so they are aware of your presence.
- Physically move close to students
- Provide children with choices. For example “You can listen and follow directions or you can sit and watch your friends play.” Poor choices may result in natural consequences (not being able to participate) or an established disciplinary action.
- Some behavior may require other approved disciplinary actions such as timeouts, verbal warnings, or limited privileges.

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