



for the Playground

Supervision Protects Children

While it may be impossible to prevent accidents from occurring on playgrounds, good supervision can help reduce the risk of injury. Supervision has several components:

Know the play environment

A playground supervisor must be familiar with the playground. This includes the play equipment, natural landscaping, ball fields and any other areas that children may use for play. Identify any areas that should be off limits to children and areas where overcrowding may occur. Know play areas, particular games or equipment where injuries are more likely to occur and give extra attention to those areas. For example, since many playground injuries result from falls, supervisors should position themselves where they can observe the climbing equipment while still being able to see other areas of the playground.

Control the play environment

A good playground supervisor constantly moves throughout the playground. There are two types of movement a playground supervisor should use. Physically move through the play environment and visually scan, always looking from one side to another. **Move with the body. Scan with the eyes.**

A playground supervisor must observe not just see. By carefully observing children's behavior, you will begin to anticipate what they are about to do and can prevent situations from occurring or escalating.

Get involved with the children but be careful. This does not mean playing games with them. If you are shooting hoops or acting as a referee you are not actively watching the rest of the children.

Supervision also means having an understanding of children's physical skills. Pay particular attention to challenging play structures. For example, young children may need additional supervision when using upper body equipment such as horizontal ladders since they often lack the upper body strength of older children. Close proximity to the equipment also enables the supervisor to discourage its improper use.

- Move with the body. Scan with the eyes.
- Observe children's behavior to anticipate dangerous situations.
- Be alert and attentive. Avoid distractions.
- Observe all the children.
- Know the risks on the playground and position supervisors near challenging games and equipment.
- Realize how quickly a child can get into a hazardous situation.