

# MUSIC MATTERS

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## Best Practices for Playground Safety

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SUMMER IS FINALLY HERE! After COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions, who would not want to run out to a school's playground and take a spin on that merry-go-round, or climb to the very top of the jungle gym, or see how fast you can get that see-saw going. Well, maybe not me, but now is the time to take a look at your equipment and the best practices for its use and care, and MUSIC has the information and resources to help you do just that. By following proven best practices for playground safety, your school district can help reduce the number of injuries attributable to playground usage. Remember, many of these injuries require trips to urgent care or the emergency room.

Do you know the answers to the following questions: How often should playgrounds be inspected? What should you look for in terms of playground safety? What supervision techniques should your staff follow? What should you look for when replacing older units or putting in something brand new? And, what about protective surfacing choices and maintenance?

If your school's playground has never been inspected, MUSIC encourages you to complete a Compliance Audit. This audit is an extensive inspection as compared to a weekly inspection. A weekly inspection will identify normal wear and tear that needs to be addressed. More frequent inspections may be necessary if the playground experiences heavy use or has been subjected to damage or vandalism. The **Loss Prevention Manual** provides information about both the Compliance Audit and the recommended weekly inspections, including forms (See pages 54 and 56-57).

Are you looking to replace playground units? Or, are you looking to put in a new playground? What protective surfacing will you use with the new playground? ALL of these questions are answered in the **Loss Prevention Manual** (See pages 51 - 58). In addition, the manual highlights best practices for purchasing, installing, maintaining, inspecting, and even supervising your playgrounds. You will also find other helpful links where you can access even more information, including an Americans with Disabilities (ADA) checklist.

The take-away is that the **Loss Prevention Manual** is a valuable resource for school districts. It provides important information related to playground installation, usage, and maintenance. In addition, the manual provides guidance on many other topics, including School Transportation, Science Lab Safety, Bleacher and Weight Room Safety, and more. So, if you have not looked at the updated manual, what are you waiting for?



Do you have questions? Feel free to contact Jim Akers, Loss Control Consultant and Certified Playground Safety Inspector, with any questions.

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