

CHILD WELFARE

Specialty Insurance Program



Marshall & Sterling Child Welfare Program Newsletter – JULY 2015

Playground Safety Best Practices

Actively Monitor Children

- Scan Left, Right, Up, & Down
- Check Blind Spots
- Move Around
- Make Eye Contact with Children
- Look for hard to see areas where children could be abused or abducted

Enforce Proper Use of Equipment

- Post Playground Rules and Teach the Children Playground Rules
- Supervise Children, especially at the end of Slides and Swing sets

Most Playground Injuries Result from Falls

- Playground Surfacing should extend 6 feet in all directions
- Check that loose fill is at least 12 inches deep
- Watch for children playing over exposed concrete footings
- Guardrails should be on elevated surfaces to prevent falls



Strangulation is the leading cause of Playground Deaths

- Check for Drawstrings
- Inspect Children's Clothing
- Watch for the area on the top of slides

Play Equipment should be matched to Specific Age Groups

- Toddler to 5 years no higher than 6 feet
- 5 – 12 Years no higher than 8 feet
- Playground Paths and buffer zones help to reduce child collisions

Check the Playground

- Look for Spaces that can trap children especially Guard Rails and Merry Go Rounds
- Look for Sharp Points or Edges; Look for Broken Equipment
- Watch for glass, bottle caps, needles and trash on the playground



Protecting Children from Concussions

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), 4 million people, many of them children, get concussions each year. Children may be especially prone to concussion while participating in sporting activities. Concussions are a type of traumatic brain injury and can have long-term impact on the health of a child. It's important to know what programs are in place to keep your child safe after a head injury. Below is basic information for preventing concussions.

Symptoms of Concussions:

- If a child exhibits any of these symptoms, he or she should be taken to an emergency room:
- Loss of consciousness
- Severe headache, including a headache that gets worse
- Blurred vision
- Confusion or slurred speech
- Unresponsiveness or difficulty waking up

Call the Doctor to Report other Symptoms:

- Vomiting
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Trouble Concentrating

Healthy Hints:

Safety gear and other simple prevention steps can help prevent a child from getting a concussion. All children should wear properly fitting headgear and other protective equipment when playing sports or biking.

Keep heavy, high-standing objects out of reach of children to prevent the object from falling and causing a head injury.

Also, **car seats and seat belts** should always be used by children in vehicles to prevent head injuries in the case of a car accident.

Treating Bug Bites and Stings

As you plan for recess, summer trips, picnics, and other outdoor activities, be prepared to encounter bugs. Here are some tips on how to treat and identify common bites and stings.

Identifying Bites and Stings:

Bees and Wasps—The site of the sting will be red, swollen, and possibly painful or itchy. Wasps will sting multiple times, while bees sting only once, leaving a stinger behind. If you are stung by a bee, you must remove the stinger carefully with a scraping motion to avoid injecting further venom, then disinfect the area. To reduce swelling, apply ice. Acetaminophen can be used to reduce the pain.

Ants—Ant stings produce itchy lumps, followed by blisters within a few hours. Disinfect the area, and to avoid a bacterial infection, do not break the blister. Oral antihistamines or cortisone creams will reduce itching.

Mosquitoes—Bites will cause red, itchy bumps. To relieve the itching, apply calamine lotion. For severe swelling, take an oral antihistamine.

Ticks—Ticks are often found embedded in the skin. If a tick is no longer present, the area around the bite may be red. To remove a tick, place tweezers at its head where it is attached to the skin and gently pull. Disinfect the area. Save the tick in a jar for several weeks so you can bring it to the doctor if you become ill.

When to seek Medical Attention:

If someone exhibits any of the following symptoms after receiving a big bite or sting, call a doctor immediately:

- Swelling larger than two inches in diameter around the bite site
- Swelling of the tongue, face or throat
- Difficulty breathing
- Chest pain or heart palpitations
- Joint pain
- Muscle stiffness or spasms
- Rash or hives
- Fever, nausea or vomiting
- Severe headaches

Be sure to follow the directions on the bottle carefully when applying insect repellent to children!