



Did you know?

- > Falls are the leading cause of playground injuries and strangulation is the most common cause of playground death.
- > Children are attracted to fire, and summer brings an increase in burn injuries from outdoor grills.
- > Almost all trampoline-related injuries to children involve backyard trampolines.
- > Most pool drownings or near drowning involve home pools and most victims are under the age of four.

Backyard Safety

During the spring and summer months, children spend countless hours playing in their backyards. There are many potential hazards in the backyard that can result in injuries to children.

Potential hazards in the backyard may involve play equipment, toys, swimming pools, barbecues, lawnmowers, poisonings, and dog bites.

Proper supervision, safe environments, hazard awareness, and participating in age-appropriate activities all help reduce the risk of injury to children in their own or in someone else's backyard.

[Learn more... >](#)

Managing the Risks ...

To help manage risks in the backyard: Look First and Get Trained.

Survey the Yard

Look First

- Make sure all fence gates are self-closing and self-latching.
- Have a fence separate the play area from the driveway and garage.

Backyard Toys

Lawn Sprinklers/Water Slides

Look First

- Use only on grass.
- Make sure the area is free of obstacles and debris.

Get Trained

- Teach children to slide sitting up and not to walk or run on water slides.

Sandboxes

Look First

- Check sandboxes regularly to make sure they are in good repair, with no protruding nails or splintered wood.
- A sandbox cover is recommended, especially if pets roam freely in your neighbourhood.

Lawn Darts

Look First

- Lawn darts are banned in Canada. Properly discard or destroy all lawn darts immediately.

Swimming/Wading Pools

Look First

- Never leave children unattended in or near water.
- Empty and turn over anything that could pose a drowning hazard (e.g. wading pools, pails). Children can drown in less than 5 cm (2 in) of water.
- Fence all backyard swimming pools. The fence should be at least 1.2 m (4 ft) high and have a self-latching, self-closing gate.

Dog Bites

Look First

- Do not leave children alone and unsupervised with dogs.

Get Trained

- Teach children not to tease or strike any dog and to be cautious around unfamiliar dogs.
- Teach children not to disturb dogs, especially when they are sleeping, eating or caring for puppies.
- Teach children not to take toys, sticks or food from a dog.

Play Equipment

Look First

- Actively supervise all young children.
- Remove drawstrings and scarves from children's clothing.
- Properly secure equipment to the ground.
- Set up backyard swings and other play equipment on a shock-absorbing surface (i.e. sand, wood chips or pea gravel).
- Put railings around all decks that are more than one metre off the ground.
- Limit height of the equipment to less than 1.8 m (6 ft).
- Check equipment for gaps, worn, loose or broken parts.

Get Trained

- Teach children the basic rules of safe play.
 - > Always wear shoes.
 - > Remove bike helmets when on equipment.
 - > Slide down feet first and sitting up. One person on the slide at a time.
 - > No pushing or horseplay on play equipment.
 - > Wait your turn.
 - > Hold on with both hands when swinging and climbing.

Poisoning

Look First

- Store all lawnmower fuel, pool chemicals, and other hazardous substances in a locked area.
- Have only non-toxic plants in your yard.

Get Trained

- If you think a child may have put a poisonous plant in their mouth:
 - > Remove any remaining pieces from the child's mouth.
 - > Bring your child and a piece of the plant to the phone.
 - > Call the Alberta Poison Control Centre at **1-800-332-1414**.
 - > Post this number by your phone.

Lawnmowers/Power Equipment

Look First

- Keep children out of the yard while mowing the lawn.
- Do not allow passengers on a riding lawnmower.
- Turn off the mower if children enter the mowing area.
- Ensure power tools are turned off and left inoperable if they must be left unattended, even for a short time.

Barbecue Basics

Look First

- When using a barbecue, establish a line around it that children cannot cross.
- Properly lock up barbecue grills, propane tanks, lighter fluid, barbecue lighters, matches, and charcoal.

Trampolines

Almost all trampoline-related injuries to children involve backyard trampolines.

Many injuries occur from falls sustained on the trampoline itself or falls onto the ground or surrounding objects. Other injuries occur when there is more than one person on the trampoline at one time.

Increased supervision (by adults or trained spotters), setting the trampoline at ground level, and padding the trampoline have all been **ineffective** in preventing injuries. The protective effect of netting has not been determined.

Because of the risk of injury and the severity of injuries, trampolines should never be used in home or recreational settings.

Manage the risks...

- > look first,
- > wear the gear,
- > get trained,
- > buckle up, and
- > drive sober.