



Safety on the Playground

More than 53 million children in the United States spend almost one-fourth of their total waking hours in school or on school property. An estimated 10 to 25 percent of the more than 14 million unintentional injuries sustained by children ages 14 and under each year occur in and around schools. Annually, one in 14 students suffers a medically attended or temporarily disabling injury at school. Public attention often focuses on school violence. However, studies indicate that school-age children are nine times

more likely to sustain an unintentional injury than to be the victim of an intentional injury while at school. Playgrounds are associated with the majority of injuries among elementary school students. Athletics, including both physical education classes and organized sports, account for the majority of injuries among secondary school students.

Playground injuries are the leading cause of injury among children ages 5 to 14 in the school environment. Nearly 40 percent of playground-related injuries occur during the months of May, June and September. Of all playground equipment-related injuries, nearly 70 percent involve falls to the surface, and 10 percent involve falls onto equipment.



President's Message

By Dan Davenport, OSSOA President

As the newly elected president of the Oregon School Safety Officers Association I have noticed a decline in attendance at our annual workshop. District budget issues can account for some decline but with reduced budgets safety becomes even more important. Faced with declining attendance the Board is hoping to increase services provided by the association. Our initial plan is to hold steering meetings in different regions of the state to get our members more involved.

Our annual workshop has always been in July in Bend. The Board plans to move the workshop to Eugene in October of 2006 to make it more accommodating. If you have any safety issues you would like addressed at the workshop, call or e-mail any of the Board members.

As districts are asked to do more with less, short-cuts are taken and accidents and injuries result. A great way to increase awareness of safety is through safety committees. Safety committees are mandated but can be really effective when they give all employees a forum to address safety concerns and to have those concerns resolved. OSSOA is in the process of creating a safety committee tool kit to start or enhance your safety committees.

OSSOA intends to create more safety program tool kits. If there are areas you wish to see OSSOA provide more resources let us know.

Safety is everyone's responsibility and OSSOA Board is here to help you with your safety concerns. I look forward to a great year of progress and growth.

Lack of supervision is associated with 40 percent of playground injuries. A recent study found that children play without adult supervision more often on school playgrounds (32 percent of the time) than playgrounds in parks (22 percent) or childcare centers (5 percent).

School-related injuries to children ages 14 and under result in an estimated \$2 billion in medical spending each year. School bus-

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News from the ...



Liability Advisory: Student Activity Transportation

Who's liable when a student is injured during an activity sponsored by a school club or team? Many people assume it's the school district. But clubs and teams often operate with little oversight by administrators, who may think the responsibility rests with the parents of participants. It's a situation that's ripe for misunderstanding - or worse.

To avert problems, districts need a structured approach to managing clubs and teams.

Using advice from school districts, OSBA-PACT has developed guidelines and tools that districts can use to reduce their risks. As with many things, communication is the key to building a clear understanding of the district's position on clubs and teams.

All forms of student-activity transportation entail some liability risk. The following list reviews risk-management strategies for each major type of transportation. The list is OSBA-PACT's preference for transportation in descending order.

School Buses -- From a risk-management standpoint, the best form of student transportation is a school bus. Buses are designed and maintained for safely transporting students. By law, drivers must meet significant training requirements in addition to having commercial driver's licenses.

District Owned Vans -- Some school districts have vans for transporting smaller groups to activities. When properly loaded and managed, they can be cost-effective. Vans should be driven by district employees who are on a list of qualified drivers and are trained to operate vans.

All forms of student-activity transportation entail some liability risk.

Charter Buses -- For longer trips, charter buses can be considered. They may have a higher cost, but will often be more comfortable than a school bus or van. The liability risk is transferred to the charter company. The student permission form for the trip should include notification to the parents that a charter bus will be used and should list the approximate schedule.

Local Mass Transit -- City buses on their regular routes can be an affordable way to transport students to an activity. The student permission form for the trip should include notification to the parents that a city bus will be used and should list the approximate schedule.

Regional Mass Transit -- This may take the form of a Greyhound Bus, Amtrak or the equivalent. The costs may be higher, but group or school discounts may be available. The student

permission form for the trip should include notification to the parents of the kind of transportation to be used, and should list the approximate schedule.

Private Cars -- Although cost effective, private cars entail risks that are more difficult to manage. The district should verify that all drivers have valid driver licenses and adequate insurance. All drivers should carry some form of communication such as a cell phone or district radio, in case there is any trouble. A list of all students traveling in each car should be both with the teacher and at the school office. If booster or car seats are used, they should be properly installed and their occupants should be properly secured with seat belts. For more information on the use of private cars in student transportation, visit the "Personal Auto Usage" section of the web site. ♦

Power Saw Replacement Program

OSBA-PACT has launched a campaign to provide Oregon schools with the next generation of safety in power saws.

The PACT started replacing existing power saws with machines from SawStop LLC in July 2005. These saws are a safety miracle, developed right here in Oregon. They are designed to shut down instantly to prevent operator injury.

The PACT's goal is to replace all existing saws with SawStop machines in two to three years. They will work on a regional basis, starting in the Portland metro area. Initial replacements will exchange shop-class saws for SawStop 10-inch cabinet saws. Later, the program will exchange saws used in drama programs for SawStop 10-inch contractors saws.

Member districts will pay nothing for the replacement saws. The only cost to districts will be for accessories and extra cartridges.



For replacement saw information visit
SawStop at
www.sawstop.com

Eligible districts will be contacted in advance of the delivery of the saws with additional information, including how to select accessories. Old saws will be removed from the districts.

For more information contact the PACT staff by phone at 1-800-547-0135 or by e-mail at osba.pact@marsh.com. ♦

Visit the OSBA-PACT Web site for more information—www.osbapact.com

Indoor Air Quality—Best Practices

Derek G. Shendell, Claire Barnett, Stephen Boese

- 1) Prevent leaks and subsequent moisture damage to materials.
- 2) Replace wet and damaged materials, including drying out underlying surfaces, as soon as possible.
- 3) Frequently wash floors and other surfaces occupants contact for general hygiene and to minimize pet allergens and bacteria.
- 4) Use non-toxic or least toxic cleaners, preferably during unoccupied hours but not immediately before school or near the end of lunch.
- 5) Use non-toxic or least-toxic teaching supplies and materials.
- 6) Allow sufficient time for me-

10) Consider criteria more specific to children and schools in future revisions to Standard 55 on occupant thermal comfort in buildings by ASHRAE. An interesting discussion point is the potential trade off between acceptable thermal comfort and adequate ventilation in climates with higher ambient relative humidity, or if HVAC technology either cannot dehumidify air or cools air using water vapor.

11) Assess in future case studies and surveys the average occupant exposure to noise from present sources during school hours and, as resources allow, contract acoustics specialists to determine spectral characteristics or frequencies of potential sources. Given noise-induced hearing

loss has no physical symptoms, the key to prevention is education and reduction of noise at the source with engineering controls or improved HVAC system technologies. For example, in the LBNL study of new relocatable classrooms, minimum measured six-minute dB (A) data suggested alternate interior finish material classrooms had lower background noise levels than standard material classrooms. This finding may constitute evidence of a secondary benefit from alternative ceiling tiles, their higher noise reduction coefficient rating (NRC). They were originally chosen since they were determined not to be formaldehyde sources.

12) Consider NRCs of interior finish material options, especially for large surface areas (ceiling tiles). Reverberation time, persistence of sound after the source stops or is removed from an unoccupied classroom, may also decrease.

13) Encourage prevention of exposure through source control and proper removal and disposal for per-

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Does Anybody Have Any Suggestions?

We'd love to hear from you. Members are the driving force behind what associations provide. And we won't know what you think unless you tell us.

If you have a specific service you think the association should be providing, let us know.

If you have issues and topics you'd like the association to cover in the newsletter, let us know.

Please contact any of the board members listed on the back page at any time with your ideas.

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related injuries alone account for \$21 million of these medical costs.

The total annual cost of school-related injuries to children ages 14 and under exceeds \$74 billion, which includes medical spending, lost quality of life and future earnings.

Avoid asphalt, concrete, grass and soil surfaces under playground equipment. Acceptable loose-fill materials include shredded rubber, hardwood fiber mulch or chips, and fine sand. Surfacing should be maintained at a depth of 12 inches and should extend a minimum of 6 feet in all directions around stationary equipment.

Always supervise children when using playground equipment. Prevent unsafe behaviors like pushing, shoving, crowding and inappropriate use of equipment. Ensure that children play on age-appropriate equipment.

National SAFE KIDS Campaign (NSKC). School Injury Fact Sheet. Washington (DC): NSKC, 2004 ♦

Visit Washington State University Applied Building Science's site at www.energy.wsu.edu/projects/building/

chanical and natural ventilation to air out classrooms after painting and receiving new furniture or teaching materials.

7) Conduct biannual or annual HVAC system inspections, and more frequent inspections and replacements of filters, to provide at least adequate ventilation (ASHRAE Standard 62) with filtration of particles and pollen allergens of outdoor origin. If possible, given weather conditions, local safety policies, and potential adjacent outdoor sources of pollution or noise, use operable windows to add natural ventilation.

8) Consider the design, installation, and commissioning of mechanical HVAC systems based on year-round ambient conditions to prevent water condensation build up on interior surfaces, leading to moisture damage and subsequent microbial growth.

9) Consult current classroom enrollment data so HVAC system damper settings allow adequate fresh outdoor air (=15 ft³ min⁻¹ occupant⁻¹).

Visit www.safekids.org for more safety information and the National Safe Kids Campaign

Did you miss a great training workshop?

The Summer Safety Workshop was held July 26 at the Inn of the Seventh Mountain in Bend.

The program featured presentations on meth lab recognition, ergonomics, theater and stage safety, indoor air quality and fire starter prevention.

If you missed the workshop and are interested in any of the subject matter discussed, let us know. We'd be happy to get the information to you. Just call or e-mail Angie Peterman at 503-588-2800 or apeterman@osba.org

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sistent organic pollutants (PCBs, phthalates), radon, asbestos, arsenic, lead, and mercury.

14) Promote policies for pollution prevention programs on environmentally preferable purchasing of school construction and interior finish materials, and teaching and cleaning supplies.

15) Avoid building new schools near freeways, due to health concerns from air pollution and noise.

16) Forbid diesel buses and trucks to remain idling near school outdoor air intake vents (assuming dampers open), to minimize indoor concentrations of vehicle-related combustion pollutants.

17) Reduce glare from incidental sunlight reflecting off surfaces (desks, computer screens) to the extent practical, and do not place student desks directly in front of windows.

18) Turn off fluorescent lights when natural light is available.

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Any questions regarding this publication or OSSOA may be answered by calling the OSBA office at (503)588-2800 or by sending an e-mail to apeterman@osba.org.

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