

Information Sheet Number 34

Trampolines

Introduction

Most research on outdoor trampoline injuries is from the USA where, due to the high injury rate the American Academy of Paediatrics, their use is not recommended by them. Most serious injuries are to the head and neck and often occur when children try to somersault and land on their head or neck instead of their feet.

It is appreciated that whilst not common in the UK there is an increasing trend to provide these, particularly at commercial play centres. Both RoSPA and British Gymnastics advise against their use unless a properly qualified British Gymnastics Coach is present. The risks of successful litigation in the event of an accident are high.

However where provided the following guidance should be observed:

1. As approximately 75% of injuries occur when more than one person is on the trampoline, use should be restricted to a single user.
2. Children under 6 are particularly vulnerable and it is recommended that a minimum age of at least 6 is placed on use of trampolines.
3. Supervision by parents is no guarantee of safety and in around half of accidents the child is being supervised by their parent/carer. (Spotters however greatly reduce this risk)
4. Where practical experienced "spotters" should be present whilst trampolines are in use. These spotters should receive appropriate training from a suitably qualified British Gymnastics Trampoline coach.
5. The area around the trampoline should be clear of objects and the

trampoline should not be near fences, tress, or other playground equipment.

6. Use a frame pad that fully covers the entire spring system and ensure that this is securely fixed against movement.
7. Ensure minimum fall height if a user comes off. This can be accommodated by:
 - Setting the trampoline in the ground (but you need to allow for good air flow both to enable to trampoline to work properly and also to allow for drying
 - Provide strong side netting (to BS 8409) to prevent user going off the side. Where netting is provided this should extend to a height of 5m above the trampoline surface
8. Ensure that the ground around the trampoline has an impact attenuating surface that meets the HIC requirements of BS EN1177. The surface should extend for 2.5m all round the trampoline. (BS EN1176 requirement for a fall height from 3m)
9. If the trampoline is raised above the ground then measures should be put in place to prevent children not using the trampoline to come within the impact area and especially to go under the trampoline.
10. Users should be required to remove all jewellery etc (include ear studs etc). Clothing should not have any hard or sharp points (buckles, toggles etc) or anything that is going to catch. They should not wear hard shoes and any socks should be non slip.
11. Appropriate notices indicating minimum age, use by only one user at a time and the provisions of 9 above should be clearly displayed.

12. Where a facility is required for use by more than one child at a time an inflatable unit rather than a trampoline is recommended (it is not possible to obtain the same height on an inflatable unit).
 - Frame pads should be checked for damage and security of fixing
 - Impact attenuating surfaces should be checked for damage and cleanliness
 - Joints, chains, and leg braces for security and possible damage
13. All staff should be fully aware of the emergency procedures for trampolining incidents at the area.
14. Never allow a child to exit the trampoline by bouncing off
15. The facility should have at least one qualified first-aid provider present at all times.
16. The equipment should be inspected by a suitable person at least once every day and the area under the trampoline should be kept free of litter etc at all times.
17. Smoking should not be allowed on, or near, the trampoline. Food and drink should also be kept well away from the area.
18. On raised trampolines children should be encouraged to get on and off the trampoline with their stomach facing the trampoline.
19. If outdoors, muddy footwear should be removed before entering the area (this includes impact attenuating surface).
20. Children should be encouraged to understand their limitations and not to try skills/moves beyond their ability or experience
21. The following should be checked at least once day and certainly before first use.
 - Wear on the bed for damaged or thin areas
 - Loose stitching or damaged of breaks in webbing
 - Uneven or high tension
 - All springs or cables should be in place and undamaged with any hooks facing downwards. Stretched springs or cables should be replaced
22. Damaged equipment should be taken out of use **immediately** and reported to the responsible safety manager.
23. It is recommended that users should not be allowed excessive time on the trampoline without a break. Untrained users do not have the muscle strength for long periods. 90 seconds is a recommended maximum time for usage without a break.
24. An appropriate accident book that meets the requirements of the Health and Safety Executive should be kept. It is recommended that the trampoline area should have its own accident book
25. There should be good access for emergency vehicles to the trampoline area.
26. All older trampolines should meet BS 1892-2-8:1986 and those manufactured from 2001 onwards should meet BS EN 13219:2001 Trampolines.

An information sheet on the use of trampolines in the garden is available on the British Gymnastics Association web site www.british-gymnastics.org

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