

Position Statement

Private Residence Trampoline Safety

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**Compiled by:
Provincial Injury Prevention Program**

Trampoline Safety

Background

Trampolines are used in a variety of supervised and unsupervised settings such as schools, gymnastics clubs, training programs, and private homes. The following position statement pertains solely to trampoline use at private residences (including private homes, cottages and temporary summer residences).

Many parents think of trampolines as a means of getting their kids outdoors and exercising; however, trampolines used at private residences pose significant risks. Trampoline-related injuries can result in broken bones, head, back and neck trauma, sprains, bruises and cuts. In some cases, injuries are severe enough to cause permanent disability and even death. At this time no provincial jurisdiction has legislation in place regarding private residences trampolines to reduce injuries.

In 2015, Albertan children aged 0-14 years visited emergency departments more than 1,900 times for injuries sustained while using trampolines (Alberta Health Services, 2016). On average, more than four children visit Alberta emergency departments each day due to trampoline use.

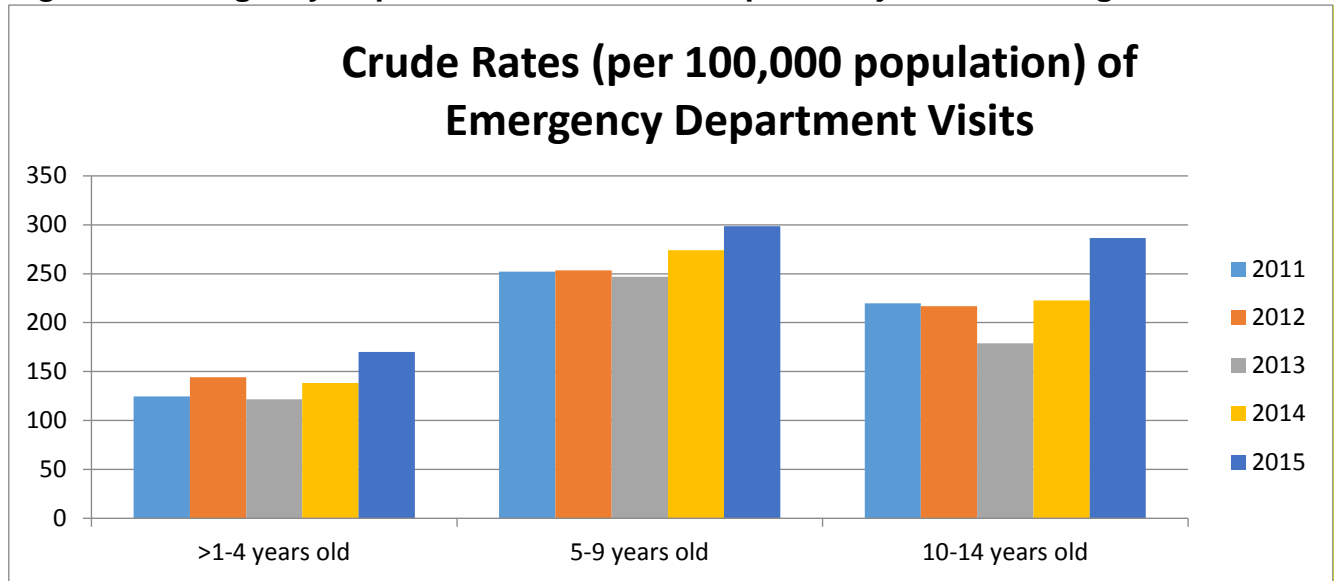
Quick Facts

- Trampoline-related injury emergency department visits (0-14 years of age) increased from 2013 to 2015 by 31%.
- In 2015, 1,919 Alberta children aged 0 to 14 years sustained trampoline-related injuries severe enough to require care in the emergency department.
 - 21% (349) had fractures to their shoulders, elbow or arms
 - 20% (297) of these children had dislocated ankles or feet
 - 18% (287) had leg fractures
 - 7% (140) of these children had head injuries
 - Remaining identified trampoline injuries do not include specific body parts
- Children five to nine years of age had the highest trampoline injury rate in both 2014 and 2015 compared to other age groups (figure 1).
- In 2015, there were 98 children between 0-14 years of age in Alberta that were injured badly enough to require hospital admission for injuries sustained from trampoline play.
- In 2015, out of 153 possible sports that are monitored only soccer had a higher injury count for 0-14 year olds than trampoline injuries.

Trampolines are often sold with safety nets to prevent people from falling off. Parents may perceive that these nets reduce the risk of injury. However, less than 30 percent of trampoline injuries are caused by children falling off the mat. According to the Canadian Pediatric Society, “the majority of trampoline injuries on backyard trampolines occur as a

result of falls while jumping directly on the trampoline mat, negating the notion that harm reduction measures such as spotters around the outside of the trampoline, parental supervision or even safety enclosures can eliminate injuries” (CPS, 2007 reaffirmed 2013).

Figure 1: Emergency Department Visits for Trampoline Injuries for All Ages



Source: Public Health Surveillance and Infrastructure, Alberta Health Services, July 2016

Figure 1 indicates that trampoline injuries have risen for all ages from 2011 to 2015. Children aged five to nine have the highest rate of emergency department visits. Crude rates were used in this figure for trampoline injuries to account for population changes between 2011 and 2015.

Prevention of Home Trampoline Injuries

There is ongoing discussion on the safety of trampolines for personal recreation, particularly at private homes. Manufacturers have attempted to improve safety through changes in engineering (safety nets and extra padding). However, these engineering changes have not been demonstrated by evidence as being effective in reducing injuries. Parachute (2016) and the Canadian Pediatric Society (2007) continue to strongly recommend against the use of home trampolines due to the high risk of injury.

Key Messages

Alberta Health Services fully supports the Canadian Pediatric Society’s position (reaffirmed in 2013) on private residential trampoline use. The use of trampolines is a high-risk activity with the potential for serious injury. The rapid increase in injuries related to the recreational use of trampolines by children is evidence that current preventive strategies are ineffective to prevent the majority of injuries. Alberta Health Services will support a harm reduction approach to injury prevention when there are evidence-informed measures that can be taken

to reduce injuries. In the case of home trampolines there are no such measures that meet this harm reduction standard.

Therefore, Alberta Health Services recommends that

- Trampolines should not be used for recreational purposes at home (including cottages and temporary summer residences) by children or adolescents.
- Parents should be advised to not purchase trampolines for the home because enclosures and adequate supervision are no guarantee against injury.
- Trampolines should not be regarded as play equipment and should not be part of home play areas.
- Health care professionals, including public health nurses, family physicians and pediatricians, should inform parents of the dangers of trampolines as a recreational toy at routine health care visits when the opportunity arises.
- Health care professionals support regulations requiring trampoline product labelling to advise consumers of dangers.

Related Resources

- [Canadian Pediatric Society Warning on Trampolines](#)
- [Backyard Safety for Children](#)
- [Home and Playground Trampoline and Bouncer Safety](#)

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