

# Age Appropriate Playground Equipment

Playgrounds should be designed to support children's physical, emotional, social and intellectual development.

Developmental needs change as children grow and age. The Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Children's Playspaces and Equipment Standard, recommends rating playgrounds according to the following age groups:

- 18 months to 5 years, or
- 5 years to 12 years

Play experiences should be appropriate and challenging for the child's age and development level.

Playground structures should be permanently labelled to notify the public of the recommended age group.



When there is no label, look at the size and complexity of the playground structure to estimate the recommended age group.

Playgrounds designed for children 18 months to 5 years have simple equipment, low platforms, and easy access to top platforms. These structures do not require a lot of full body coordination or upper body strength.

Example of playground designed for ages 18 months to 5 years:



The following equipment is **not recommended** for children under the age of 5 years:

1. Free standing arched climbers
2. Fulcrum see-saws unless they have a spring centering mechanism
3. Log Rolls
4. Pulley or Cable Rides
5. Slide poles including fire poles
6. Track rides
7. Trampolines<sup>i</sup>

Playgrounds designed for ages 5 to 12 years have higher platforms, sliding poles, challenging climbing features, and equipment that requires full body coordination and upper body strength.

Example of playground designed for ages 5 to 12 years:



Trampolines<sup>i</sup> are **not recommended** for children aged 5 to 12 years.

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<sup>i</sup> Jumping on the trampoline is a high risk activity with the potential for significant injury to children and youth.

Trampoline uses in homes and playgrounds. (2013). Canadian Pediatric Society Position Paper.

Found online at <http://www.cps.ca/documents/position/trampoline-home-use>

Home Safety: Play time. (2016) Parachute. <http://www.parachutecanada.org/injury-topics/item/home-safety-play-time>

**For more information, please contact your nearest Environmental Public Health office.**

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