



Trampolines unsafe for children at any age

As a parent, you know the importance of making sure your children stay safe. But when kids get off the couch, one activity they should avoid is jumping on a trampoline.

Given the risk of serious injury, the hazards trampolines can pose outweigh any benefits to your child's health.

Trampoline-related injuries, which generally occur on home trampolines, include cuts, strains and sprains, broken bones and even spinal injuries. Such injuries rose 140% between 1990 and 1996, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

Injuries can occur on small or large trampolines, and girls and boys are equally as likely to be injured. Because of these risks, the AAP recommends that trampolines not be used at home or in physical education classes in schools.

The AAP offers the following guidelines regarding trampolines:

- Trampolines should not be viewed as play equipment for children. Do not keep a trampoline at home, whether indoors or outdoors, for your children to jump on.
- Make sure your child's school does not have a trampoline on the playground, as this can pose a serious hazard.
- Use of a trampoline is appropriate only under the direct supervision of trained individuals such as physical therapists or athletic trainers. If used under these conditions, only one person should be on the trampoline at a time.
- Children younger than age 6 should never use a trampoline, even in supervised training programs.
- The surface of a trampoline used for supervised training programs should be checked routinely for rust, tears and detachments.
- A safety pad should cover all portions of the steel frame and springs.

-Allison Bond
April 2008 American Academy of Pediatrics