



# SAFE PLAY IN THE BACKYARD



Play is an important part of childhood - it helps children develop physical strength, coordination, balance, social skills, imagination and problem solving skills.

Backyards are a favourite place to play for children - a Kidsafe backyard is one that provides plenty of child friendly, challenging things to do, without any major hazards.

The information below will help you to maintain an exciting and safe space for your children to enjoy.

## PLAY EQUIPMENT

When choosing backyard play equipment for your children, Kidsafe Victoria recommends choosing equipment that complies with the Australian Standard AS 4685.

Backyard play equipment should be sturdy, strong and well maintained. It's also important that:

- Equipment suits the age and the size of children
- There is a suitable impact absorbing surface under and around the equipment
- Equipment is set up in a safe play area that provides shade, is easily supervised and accessible and away from hazards including pools and driveways
- Equipment is regularly checked for wear, tear and safety hazards
- There are no sharp edges, pieces that can come loose and no openings or moving parts that can trap or injure children
- Trampolines comply with the Australian Standard AS 4989 and have safety pads installed to cover the frame and springs



## BACKYARD SAFE PLAY CHECKLIST

- Supervise children on and around play equipment at all times
- Keep the backyard clear from rubbish and remove any trip hazards
- Fence off play areas from hazards including driveways and pools or spas
- Remove any poisonous plants that could harm children
- Keep tools and chemicals locked away out of the sight and reach of children
- Never leave lawn mowers or other equipment switched on and unsupervised when children are around
- Empty containers, buckets and wading pools when not in use
- Always supervise children around barbecues and when interacting with pets
- Cover garden ponds and water features with a grate, grill or mesh cover



It's important that playspaces provide children with a range of opportunities to use their imagination and creativity - along with structured pieces of play equipment like swings, slides, trampolines and cubby houses, consider including some natural playspace elements in your backyard. These could include things like digging patches which can be integrated into vegetable gardens, rocks and boulders, sound elements like wind chimes and quiet areas where children can interact with the environment. The possibilities are endless!