Playground and Equipment Safety Checks: What to Inspect Daily Stats and Facts

FACTS

1. **Worn or Damaged Equipment:** Cracked plastic, rusted metal, or weakened components can fail during use, leading to sudden falls or structural collapse.
2. **Loose Hardware and Fasteners:** Missing or loosened bolts, nuts, and connectors can cause instability in swings, slides, and climbing structures.
3. **Entrapment Hazards:** Openings in equipment can trap a child’s head, neck, or limbs, creating a risk of strangulation or serious injury.
4. **Inadequate Impact Surfacing:** Worn, compacted, or missing protective surfacing increases the severity of injuries during falls.
5. **Sharp Edges and Protrusions:** Exposed metal edges, broken parts, or protruding bolts can cause cuts, punctures, or snagging hazards.
6. **Slip and Trip Hazards:** Wet surfaces, debris, and uneven ground create fall risks, especially in high-activity play areas.
7. **Poor Equipment Spacing and Clearance:** Insufficient distance between structures can lead to collisions, struck-by incidents, or unsafe use of equipment.

STATS

- In the United States, o**ver 200,000 children are treated annually for playground-related injuries**, with falls to unsafe or poorly maintained surfaces as the leading cause (U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, recent reporting).
- Falls account for **approximately 50% or more of playground injuries**, often linked to inadequate surfacing or equipment condition (CPSC, 2021–2023 data trends).
- In Canada, playground-related incidents result in t**housands of emergency visits annually**, with equipment condition and surface hazards identified as key contributing factors (Public Health Agency of Canada, recent years).
- U.S. safety data shows that **defective or poorly maintained equipment is a contributing factor in a significant portion of serious playground injuries**, including fractures and head injuries (CPSC reports, recent cycles).
- In Canada, **falls from playground equipment are the leading cause of injury among children in supervised settings**, often tied to surface conditions and equipment wear (Canadian injury surveillance data, recent years).