



## Health Happenings August 2010

(A Monthly Newsletter by Mary Ann Kuehnel, RN, CYSS Nurse)

During the "dog days of summer", there's nothing better than a good push on a swing or a long ride down a fast slide at the 'ole park. Children are fearless, but we as parents have to be mindful of playground safety. Here are a few basic tips!

- Survey the playground first. Make sure there aren't any hazards such as broken sharp items or glass, litter, broken equipment, exposed footings, tree stumps or rocks.
- Supervision is a must! Make sure there aren't any blind spots so you're able to see your child at all times.
- Check it out! Know your child is playing on age-appropriate, safely anchored equipment. The equipment should be at a safe temperature and all platforms and ramps should have guardrails to prevent falls. Protruding bolts and open S-hooks could catch on loose clothing or objects. (Loose strings and jump ropes can also cause accidental strangulation if caught on the equipment.)
- Cushion the landings! Nearly 70 percent of all playground injuries are related to falls to the surface. Acceptable surfaces include hardwood fiber/mulch, pea gravel, sand and synthetic materials such as poured-in-place rubber mats or tiles. Surfaces should not be concrete, asphalt, grass, blacktop, packed dirt or rocks.
- Remember to report any unsafe condition(s) immediately to the owner of the playground.

Remembering these basic tips can provide a fun time for the kids and keep a trip to the Emergency Room at bay!