

Planning a new playground or upgrading an existing playground can be time consuming however the benefits of research will empower you to make informed decisions resulting in a safe and exciting playspace for children.

Research, Research, Research

Before making decisions about a playground project it is important to do your research and collect valuable information.

Visit playgrounds, schools, education and care services and pay attention to details such as the type of equipment and surfacing provided and how both have worn. Look out for interesting, non-traditional play items that make the space unique. Ask questions of playground owners regarding any problems with the playground design, equipment or suppliers.

Involve educators, teachers, parents and in particular the children in the planning of the playspace. Children are more likely to use and enjoy the playspace if they have been involved in the project.

A great way to involve children is to develop a wish list with desired play activities and use a 'mud map'. This process will assist in selecting a supplier who best fits the needs and style of the school, education and care service or local community.



Australian Standards

Select playground equipment that complies with the Australian Standard AS 4685 Playground equipment and surfacing.

Surfacing is required to comply with AS 4685 Playground equipment and surfacing and AS 4422 Playground surfacing.

It is important to request manufacturer's certification of compliance to Australian Standards. File these with your records as part of the playground safety management system.

Planning

- Contact Kidsafe for design information and advice regarding playground projects
- Prepare a realistic budget. Schedule and prioritise stages of works in keeping with the budget and extent of the project
- Consider engaging a landscape architect or playground designer experienced in designing playspaces for children
- Provide inclusive play activities suitable for all ages and abilities
- When selecting playground equipment and surfacing suppliers, ensure they can provide you with evidence their product complies to the Australian Standards
- Enquire about follow up services and warranty periods. Obtain references from previous customers
- Visit equipment manufacturers and playspace designer's websites - these websites are full of good ideas and information

Installation

Nominate an on-site supervisor who is fully briefed on the design and planned location of the equipment and surfacing.

Ensure certification of compliance to AS 4685 and AS 4422 is obtained and retained as part of the Playground Safety Management System.

Comprehensive Post Installation Inspection

An independent, comprehensive post installation inspection is required before handover and/or opening of the playground. The purpose of the inspection is to verify the playground meets the Australian Standards. Hazards identified in the inspection report should be discussed with the installer/manufacture promptly and appropriate repairs or modifications made. The playground can be opened providing unacceptable risk is not present.

Refer to the information sheet Playground Safety Management System for information regarding inspection frequencies, maintenance schedules and documentation.

Evaluation and Monitoring

Once your playground is in use, it is important to evaluate and monitor it regularly to ensure the space is a safe and exciting playspace.

Ask the children what they think of the playground!

If areas are found to be unpopular or not used as anticipated, design modifications can be implemented to keep the playspace active and thriving. Similarly, well loved and used activity areas may require additional reinforcing of natural ground surfaces to ensure longevity and safe conditions.



CONTACT KIDSAFE SA

Phone: (08) 7089 8554

Email: play@kidsafesa.com.au

Need more help? Kidsafe SA provides a playground inspection service. Contact us for a quote to organise an inspector to visit your playspace and provide specific advice.