



## **BACKYARD SAFE PLAY**

***Thanks to Kidsafe NSW for this information.***

There are no laws covering the equipment children can play on in their own backyards, however there are Australian Standards for play equipment. Australian Standards exist to reduce the number and severity of playground injuries and enable children to play confidently in a safe environment. Australian Standards not only apply to play items but also the surrounding area. When purchasing play items and installing them in your backyard ask the question "Does it comply with the Australian Standards?"

- ◆ The backyard should be clear from general rubbish and trip hazards;
- ◆ Tools, equipment and chemicals should be locked away in safe storage;
- ◆ Play equipment should comply to the Australian Standards;
- ◆ Locate play equipment in an area that is densely shaded and easily accessible, away from the driveway, pool or other hazards;
- ◆ Ensure play equipment is age appropriate and size appropriate;
- ◆ Ensure play equipment is strong, sturdy and securely anchored; secure ropes top and bottom so they cannot form a noose;
- ◆ Play equipment should not have sharp edges, splinters or protruding parts that could pierce skin, or tangle children's clothing; take cords out of children's clothing;
- ◆ Supervise young children on and around play equipment at all times; and,
- ◆ Fence off driveways from play areas.

## **MAINTENANCE**

**REGULARLY:** check all play items for spiders and insects check the condition of all play items for splinters, rust or detachments or weakening related to sun exposure check all play items are securely anchored rake soft fall material and maintain to a depth of 250mm check sandpits for animal contamination check all chains (eg, swings) for rust, wear and tear.

## **CUBBY HOUSES**

A cubby house can be a creative and imaginary play space for children. When purchasing and/or installing a cubby house:

- ◆ Ensure it is an appropriate size for young children including handrails (large timber logs don't allow a child's firm hand grip);
- ◆ Ensure fall height is no greater than 1m for 0-3 yrs and 1.5m for 3-5 yrs. The design of the cubby should not allow children to climb onto the roof or surrounding structures;
- ◆ If the cubby is climbable then soft fall should be installed with a safe fall zone of 1.9m or 2.5m;
- ◆ ALL guardrailing on the cubby structure should be VERTICAL not horizontal with a recommended guard rail height of 900mm. This reduces the chance of a child climbing higher;
- ◆ Ensure that there are no sharp edges or splinters or entrapment areas on or within the unit; and,
- ◆ A cubby at ground level reduces the risk of falls.