



COVID-19 Playground Guidance

General Guidance

- Given the nature of free play during recess and children's natural inclination to group together to play, it may be difficult to ensure that children maintain social distancing.
- Face coverings should be worn in accordance with the Governors' Emergency Order.
- Social distancing (6 feet between people, particularly when face coverings are not/cannot be worn) should be maintained to the greatest extent practicable.
- Equipment (touch surfaces), gates, seating and other commonly touched surfaces that can be easily disinfected (fiberglass, plastic, metal, etc.) should be disinfected at least once per day or between groups.
- Playgrounds at child care facilities, schools or other high traffic facilities should be disinfected more frequently, including between different groups of children using them.

Signage should be present at the playground to:

- Examples of appropriate signage are available here <https://coronavirus.delaware.gov/coronavirus-graphics/>
- Encourage everyone to social distance, wear face coverings (as appropriate) and wash or sanitize their hands before and after use
- Notify users of how often and when the playground is typically cleaned and disinfected each day
- Remind them that the playground is not disinfected between users which makes frequent hand washing and sanitizing more important
- Encourage users to wipe down equipment if not in use when they arrive
- Identify locations of hand sinks or hand sanitizer present at the facility

- Remind people they must wash or sanitize hands before and after playground use

Additional Recommendations

- Offer outdoor play in staggered shifts
- If multiple groups are outside at the same time, they should have a minimum of 6 feet of open space between outdoor play areas or visit these areas in shifts so that they are not congregating
- Always wash hands immediately after outdoor playtime
- Make hand sanitizer available for staff and children
- Keep groups together – maintain the same groups from day to day. This will help reduce potential exposures.

Source: Washington State Department of Health (modified by DPH 3/24/21)

Cleaning Playground and Equipment

Guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicates that outdoor areas like playgrounds in schools and parks generally require normal routine cleaning, but do not require disinfection.

Focus cleaning efforts on plastic or metal high-touch surfaces where hands frequently make direct contact like grab bars and railings between groups of children. It is not practical to disinfect entire large playground structures, and is not proven to reduce risk of COVID-19 to the public. Cleaning and disinfection of wooden surfaces (play structures, benches, tables) or groundcovers (mulch, sand) are not recommended. Establish daily routines for cleaning playground equipment such as rubber balls, jump ropes, etc. Set up a system and educate children about how to care for equipment when they start and end play.

Resources - CDC: Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>)

CDC: Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open – Supplemental Guidance (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>)

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