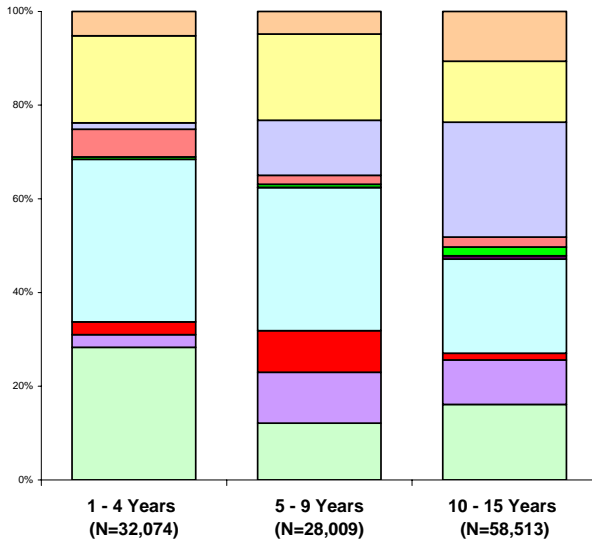


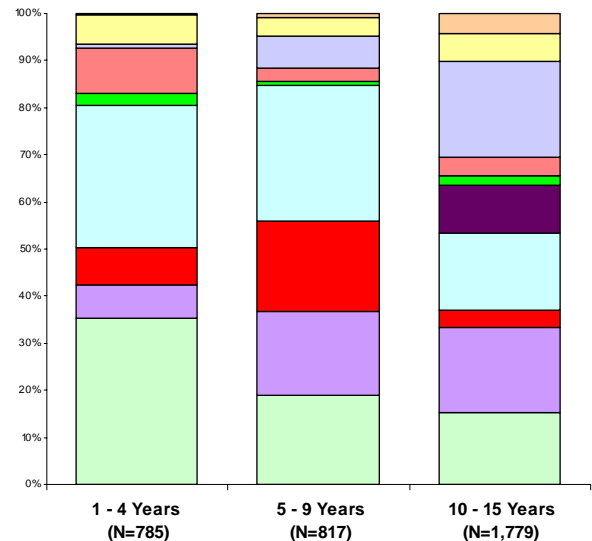
Playground falls in the Calgary Health Region, 2002/03-06/07

Think falls from playground equipment are no big deal? Think again.

All Injury Related Emergency Department Visits



All Injury Related Hospitalizations



- All other Injuries
- Transportation
- Playground falls
- All other falls
- Suicide
- Violence
- Poisoning
- Sports
- Struck by/against^
- Overexertion

^ Struck by / against an object or person.

Injury Related Emergency Department Visits Children 1 - 15 years old

- Falls were the leading cause of injury related visits to emergency departments
- 3,921 children were seen in emergency departments after falling from playground equipment

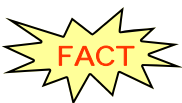
Injury Related Hospital Admissions Children 1 - 15 years old

- Falls were the leading cause of injury related hospitalizations
- 286 children were treated in hospitals after falling from playground equipment

The injury burden for playground falls is highest among 5 - 9 year olds.

Among 5 - 9 year olds, falls from playground equipment accounted for:

- 7.9% of injury related emergency department visits
- 19.2% of injury related hospital admissions



Emergency department visits for playground falls were approximately equal among genders, but hospitalizations for playground falls were more common among girls than boys



Playground falls lead to more than just bumps and bruises.

Types of Playground Fall Injuries Children 5 - 9 years old

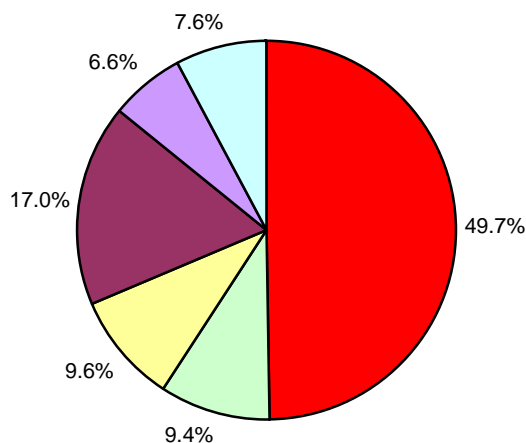
The leading types of playground fall injuries treated in emergency departments were:

- Fractures (49.7%)
- Superficial wounds (17.0%)

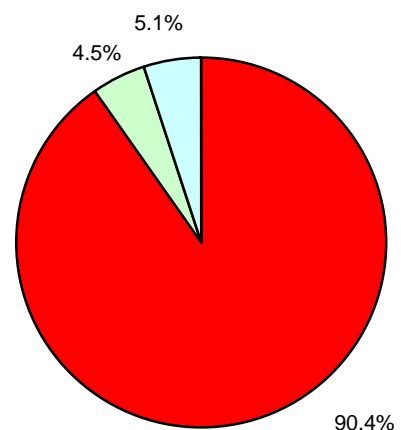
Playground fall injuries treated in hospitals included:

- Fractures (90.4%)
- All other injuries (5.1%)
- Head injuries (4.5%)

Types of Playground Fall Injuries
Treated in the Emergency Department



Types of Playground Fall Injuries
Treated in Hospital



■ Fractures
 ■ Head injuries
 ■ Open wounds
 ■ Superficial
 ■ Sprains, strains, dislocations
 ■ Other injury

Playground falls are predictable.

Between 1997 and 2006, a total of 1,991 children between the ages of 5 and 9 years old were treated at the Alberta Children's Hospital in Calgary after falling from playground equipment. Of these:

- The majority (43.0%) fell from monkey bars, jungle gyms, or other climbers, while 17.3% fell from swings, 14.1% fell from slides, and the remainder (25.6%) fell from other types of equipment.
- The majority (47.0%) were injured at a school playground, while 24.5% were injured at a playground in a public park, 15.1% were injured at a residential playground, and the remainder (13.4%) were injured at a playground in another location.

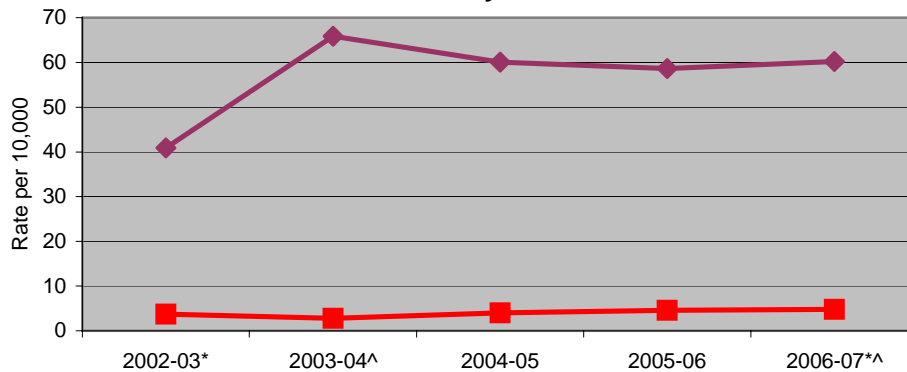


Rates of playground fall injuries are increasing.

Trends in playground fall-related injuries Children 5 - 9 years old

- The rate of visits to emergency departments for playground fall injuries increased significantly between 2002-03 and 2006-07, from 40 in 10,000 to 60 in 10,000.
- The rate of hospitalizations for playground fall injuries increased significantly between 2003-04 and 2006-07, from 2.8 in 10,000 to 4.8 in 10,000.

Emergency Department Visit Rate per 10,000 and
Hospitalization Rate per 10,000 for Playground Fall Injuries,
Children 5 - 9 years old



* Significant difference in emergency department visits for playground falls between 2002/03 and 2006/07

^ Significant difference in hospitalizations for playground falls between 2003/04 and 2006/07

◆ Emergency Department Visit Rate per 10,000

■ Hospitalization Rate per 10,000

Playground injuries are preventable.

Parents and caregivers often assume that playground falls are a natural and unavoidable consequence of play, yet the risk of injury can be greatly reduced through three key strategies:

- **Equipment that meets current safety standards.** All public playgrounds in the City of Calgary and at Calgary-area school boards comply with current guidelines established by the Canadian Standards Association (CSA). While these playgrounds are inspected and maintained on a regular basis, community members can help by removing hazards from the play area and checking the condition of the equipment. The *Playground Safety YES Test* is a quick and easy tool for checking the safety of an outdoor playground. See www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/playgroundsafety.
- **Ensuring that there is a protective surface under and around the equipment.** Approved surfaces for use in Calgary-area playgrounds include both loose-fill surfacing like pea gravel and rubber crumb, and rubber surfacing. Grass and dirt are not protective surfaces.
- **Maintaining active supervision for children at play.** Active supervision involves staying nearby, paying close attention, and anticipating risks. Children at playgrounds should be dressed for safe play - with footwear, and without bike helmets, clothes with drawstrings, scarves, or loose hair or clothing. Children should always use equipment that is appropriate for their age, size, and ability.

For more information, visit www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/playgroundsafety.

