

# Albany Safe Playground Program



Presented by Tracy Blaszkow

# WHAT IS THE ALBANY SAFE PLAYGROUND PROGRAM?

A playground safety program in conjunction with the City of Albany, creating awareness of playground safety and providing an ongoing volunteer support system for the regular checking of playground maintenance

# PROJECT GOAL

- To reduce the incidence and severity of falls from playground equipment by children in the City of Albany



# WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

- Create an awareness of playground safety to the broad community and indicate who is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of playgrounds
- Increase the community capacity and skills to assist with regular ongoing maintenance on playgrounds
- Create a sense of ownership and responsibility by the community to the playgrounds
- Assist the City of Albany Parks staff with the ongoing maintenance checks on playgrounds
- Build the Capacity of the local community

# WHO ARE THE ASPP MONITORS?

- Three local mothers -  
trained by Playsafe  
and Kidsafe WA
- Frequent users of the  
parks around Albany



# NUMBER OF AUDITS DONE



- 27 Playgrounds in the City of Albany
- As of September 2004, there had been 122 playground audits completed

# CRITERIA

- Each playground standard was ranked using the following criteria:
  - Fully meets Australian standards
  - Mostly meets Australian standards
  - Partially meets Australian standards
  - Limited standards met
  - Does not meet Australian standards at all

# SAFETY STANDARDS

- Each playground was assessed on how well it met the safety standards in relation to the following six safety areas:
  - Soft Fall
  - Sand Depth
  - Height
  - Structural Soundness
  - Moving Parts
  - Entrapments





# FUNDING



- The Albany Safe Playground Program was a 3 year Council funded program
- Commenced in September 2001 and completed in September 2004
- The program was run in three one year cycles, focusing on:
  - City of Albany: community playgrounds in 2001/2002
  - City of Albany: other playgrounds such as Progress Associations in 2002/2003
  - Commercial/Other Playgrounds in 2003/2004

# SUBSEQUENT PROJECTS

- Safe Play Health Kids Forum Sept 2002
- Displays & talks
- Playground Tour
- Web Page
- Albany Playground Advisory Group
- Adopt a Park Pilot

# RESULTS: SOFT FALL

- March 2001, only 18% of playgrounds fully or mostly met the appropriate Australian standards for soft fall surfaces
- By August/September 2004 over 40% of playgrounds fully or mostly met the appropriate Australian standards for soft fall surfaces



# RESULTS: SAND DEPTH

- In March 2001, only 18% of playgrounds fully or mostly met the appropriate Australian standards for sand depth
- By August/September 2004 over 40% of playgrounds fully or mostly met the appropriate Australian standards for sand depth



# RESULTS: PLAYGROUND HEIGHTS

- In March 2001, 44% of playgrounds fully or mostly met the appropriate Australian standards for playground height
- By August/September 2004 over 70% of playgrounds fully or mostly met the appropriate Australian standards for playground height



# RESULTS: STRUCTURAL SOUNDNESS

- In March 2001, 37% of playgrounds fully or mostly met the appropriate Australian standards for structural soundness
- By August/September 2004 52% of playgrounds fully or mostly met the appropriate Australian standards for structural soundness



# RESULTS: MOVING PARTS

- In March 2001 nearly 30% of playgrounds fully or mostly met the appropriate Australian standards for moving parts
- By August/September 2004 nearly 60% of playgrounds fully or mostly met the appropriate Australian standards for moving parts



# RESULTS: ENTRAPMENTS

- In March 2001 41% of playgrounds fully or mostly met the appropriate Australian standards for entrapments
- By August/September 2004 nearly 52% of playgrounds fully or mostly met the appropriate Australian standards for entrapments



# NON STANDARD AREAS

- In addition each playground was assessed in other non-standards, which have an impact on safety and use
- They were ranked using the following criteria:
  1. Not Acceptable
  2. Partially Acceptable
  3. Acceptable

# McGonnell Park

Before

After



# REGULAR MAINTENANCE

- In March 2001 55% of playgrounds did not have acceptable regular maintenance playground checks
- By August/September 2004 only 15% of parks did not have acceptable maintenance playground checks

# RUBBISH BINS

- This was one of the only areas in the Albany Safe Playground Program where there was a negative change over the three years of the program
- In March 2001 54% of parks had acceptable numbers/types of bins
- By August/September 2004 the number of playgrounds with acceptable bins had dropped to 50% and 46% of playgrounds had unacceptable numbers/types of bins

# OVERALL PLAYGROUND RESULTS

- The playgrounds were also analysed as to any 'collective change' within each park
- Total scores for each playground were analysed from 2001 and 2004, highlighting any changes to the overall standing of the park
- Again each park was assessed on meeting the Australian playground standards and some non-standard items

# FINAL RESULTS

- Of the 27 playgrounds assessed as part of the Albany Safe Playground Program from 2001 to 2004:
  - 11% (3) were great playgrounds from the start, met the Australian playground standards and were consistently maintained over the three years
  - 63% (17) improved in meeting the Australian Playground standards over the three years
  - 18.5% (5) did not meet Australian playground standards or change standing over the three years
  - 7.5% (2) decreased in meeting Australian playground standards over the three years

# WHO WAS INVOLVED?

- City of Albany Parks and Reserves Coordinator
- Department of Sport & Recreation
- Family & Children's Services
- Lower Great Southern Health Service
- Great Southern Public Health Unit
- Playsafe WA
- Kidsafe WA
- Albany Injury Prevention Association committee
- Playground Monitors