

BOUNCE HOUSE SAFETY

INTRODUCTION

Adding a bounce house to your function could ensure hours of enjoyment and may seem like a simple and low-risk attraction. However, bounce houses are also the cause of many serious injuries.

According to some studies, 30 children are injured and treated in hospital emergency rooms per day because of injuries associated with bounce houses or inflatables. Several considerations must be made when planning an event to promote safety and reduce the possibility of injuries.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Location of the event and location of the bounce house
 - Is the area safe for large gatherings?
 - Is the bounce house positioned away from traffic and parking areas?
 - What type of surface will it be placed on?
- Supervision of the bounce house
 - Who will supervise the bounce house, and will it be constant supervision?
- Staff training
 - Are your event staff trained in safe operation and the manufacturer's safety recommendations for the device?
- Weather
 - Do you have staff dedicated to monitoring weather conditions?
 - Do you have an inclement weather contingency plan?

REDUCING YOUR EXPOSURE

- Follow all manufacturer's use and safety recommendations for the device.
- Train your staff in the safe operation of the device to the manufacturer's recommendations and document all training.
- Maintain adult supervision at all times.

- Ensure the appropriate child-to-adult supervision ratio is manageable for the person supervising the bounce house.
- Place the bounce house in an appropriate location on a flat surface with no surrounding hazards, away from traffic and vehicle parking areas.
- Ensure the bounce house is correctly set up and tied down per the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Limit the number of children playing in the attraction (consult the manufacturer's instructions/manual for appropriate capacity).
- Determine the activity level of the youngest child.
- The safest way to use an inflatable is to allow only one child to use it at a time. If more than one child will be using the device at the same time, you should limit the play groups to similar-aged or sized children.
- Prohibit rough play (tackling, wrestling, flips, etc.).
- Do not allow prohibited items, particularly:
 - Sharp objects
 - Food and drinks
 - Any additional toys
 - Jewelry/glasses
- Pay close attention to ever-changing weather conditions. Storms can be dangerous for a variety of reasons. Although bounce houses getting struck by lightning may be rare, it is still a concern. More pressing is the risk of wind. High winds can threaten a bounce house no matter how well it is tied down. If the weather conditions deteriorate, ensure no one is playing in the bounce house and deflate it, if possible.

TREATING INJURIES

While your goal should be to have an injury-free event, some injuries may occur. If an injury does occur in or around the bounce house, you should first advise the parent/guardian of the injury and allow them to seek treatment. If a parent/guardian is not in the area, remembering some basic first aid can help.

- Minor scrapes and cuts
 - Clean the area with soap and water
 - Cover with a bandage
 - Inform parent/guardian

- Heat-related problems and illness
 - Bring the person to a cool place and elevate their feet
 - Keep the child cool
 - Consider activating 911 and informing the parent/guardian
- Serious injuries
 - Activate 911 and inform parent/guardian
 - Document all injuries


HOLD HARMLESS / INDEMNITY AGREEMENTS

Hold harmless/indemnity agreements, or waivers, are written agreements whereby one party agrees to hold the other party harmless should a loss or injury occur. These waivers are highly recommended for events where a bounce house will be used. Your legal counsel should review a hold harmless/ indemnity agreement before its use.

CONCLUSION

The ultimate goal is to have a safe event that includes the use of an inflatable. By being proactive and taking the necessary precautions, you can minimize the risk of injuries and help ensure the success of your event.

***Contact MML Risk Management Services Staff/
or your Loss Control Consultant for more information.***

	Important Phone Numbers
MML Risk Management Services	734.662.3246 or 800.653.2483
Loss Control Services	800.482.0626

Note:

***This document is not intended to be legal advice.
It only identifies some of the issues surrounding this topic.
Public agencies are encouraged to review their procedures with an expert
or a competent attorney who is knowledgeable about the subject.***