

Backyard safety tips for homeowners: 8 kid-friendly improvements.



As the weather warms up and the days get longer, many of us are excited to spend more time outside with our families and friends. And what better way to do that than in the comfort of your own backyard? From tag to hide-and-seek, the opportunities for kids to play, explore, and engage in physical activity are endless. But first, it's important to prepare your space so children stay safe on your property.

To learn more about backyard safety before summer officially begins, read our eight tips:

1. **Check your equipment.** A backyard with swing sets, trampolines, and sports equipment can provide constant entertainment for kids, but it's important to make sure everything is in good condition. Ensure all equipment is installed safely and securely, check for signs of wear and tear, and make any necessary repairs or replacements. Or, if you're investing in new equipment, you'll want to look for items that are age-appropriate and are sturdy enough to withstand regular use.
2. **Create a safe play zone.** Designate a specific area in your yard that's safe and child-friendly — away from dangerous areas like pools, ponds, hot tubs, grills, fire pits, air conditioners, generators, and electrical meters. You can do this with a fence, natural boundaries like bushes or hedges, or by setting up a kid-friendly gazebo or play area.
3. **Secure your pool.** Pool safety is imperative, whether it's in use or it's not. That means putting up a secure fence or barrier around it with a lock or latch children can't open without your help. In addition, non-slip mats can reduce the risk of slips, accidents, and injuries on a pool day. Always keep appropriate life preservers nearby and have an attentive adult watching the pool at all times while kids are swimming.

4. **Pay attention to your pets.** Pets can be unpredictable when new guests come over. To reduce the risk of timid, playful, or aggressive behavior toward backyard visitors, it's best to keep pets indoors and away from children. If you do let your pets play with visitors, keep a watchful eye and step in before any behavior gets out of hand.
5. **Clear safe paths.** It's every homeowner's responsibility to maintain safe, clear walkways for visitors. Before friends come over, move loose sticks and debris from the grass or walkway. Route things like hoses and extension cords along the perimeter of the yard or path so they don't become tripping hazards. Clear walkways around backyard furniture so there's plenty of room to navigate. Have backyard sprinkler systems or landscaping lights? If they're in high-traffic areas, consider covering them or marking them with cones. These proactive measures can help stop trips, falls, and other preventable injuries.
6. **Supervise your bonfire.** Nothing says summer like a night around the bonfire. Any time you are hosting guests, especially little ones, put safety first. Implement a radius of at least three feet around the flames that kids can't enter. Keep blankets and loose clothing at a safe distance. If kids are eager to play games while the fire's lit, usher them to the other side of the yard and away from the flames. Remember, every safe bonfire follows these seven safety tips.
7. **Teach safety rules.** While it's important to make your backyard safe, it's also important to teach children how to be safe themselves. Make sure they know to always wear helmets when riding bikes and to never run near pools or other bodies of water. Show them how to properly use equipment like swings and slides, and establish rules for playing safely with others. Finally, make sure kids understand the importance of respecting boundaries and playing responsibly, both in your backyard and in other outdoor spaces.
8. **Keep an eye on your kids and their friends.** No matter how safe you make your backyard, kids are human, and accidents happen. Keep a close eye on children when they're playing outside or, if that's not always an option, consider installing outdoor security cameras you can monitor from inside. And if a child does get injured while playing outside, make sure you have a well-stocked first-aid kit and know how to use it.

Ready to soak up the sun with your friends and loved ones? With a little effort and attention to detail, you can make your backyard a place where countless happy memories are made. To ensure you have adequate homeowners protection, contact a local, independent agent to review your coverage. And for more on family adventures, read our blog posts: [10 road trip tips to keep your family safe](#) and [4 ways to keep kids entertained on a road trip](#).