

Riding a slide while on a parent's lap increases the risk of injury

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Going down a slide on a parent's lap can lead to a broken leg for small children. An estimated 352,698 children less than 6 years of age were injured on slides in the United States from 2002 through 2015, and many of those injuries were leg fractures.

The study abstract, "The Mechanisms and Injuries Associated with Playground Slides in Young Children: Increased Risk of Lower Extremity Injuries with Riding on Laps," will be presented Monday, Sept. 18, at the American Academy of Pediatrics National Conference & Exhibition in Chicago.

New research looks at the nature of injuries young [children](#) experience on playground slides. Of those under 6 years old, toddlers age 12-23 months had the highest percentage of injuries. The most common [injury](#) overall was a fracture at 36 percent, usually involving the lower leg. In the majority of cases, this type of fractures happens when the child's foot catches the edge or bottom of the slide, then twists and bends backward while sitting on a parent's lap.

"Many parents and caregivers go down a slide with a young child on their lap without giving it a second thought," states lead researcher Charles Jennissen, MD, Clinical Professor and Pediatric Emergency Medicine Staff Physician, University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine. "And in most cases I have seen, the parents had no idea that doing so could possibly give their child such a significant injury. They often say they would never have done it had they known."

The size and weight of adults apparently plays a big role in the potential for injury. Jennissen says that a young child sliding by themselves is unlikely to get a severe injury to their leg even if the foot catches due to the relatively low forces involved. However, he states that the force generated by the forward momentum of an adult with a child on their lap is much greater, and can easily break a bone if a child's foot gets caught on the slide.

The study's researchers recommend that adults and teens not go down a slide with a young child on their lap. They state that parents and caregivers who elect to do so must use extreme caution to prevent the [child's foot](#) from catching on the slide's surfaces.

Provided by American Academy of Pediatrics

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