

RPII Statement

Playground Usage Surges During Second Lockdown

Playground
temporarily
closed

Inner West Council has
closed the playground in
line with advice from the
Australian Government.

This is to keep the
community safe at
this time.



Playground Usage Surges During Second Lockdown

One in three parents and carers visited a playground with their children last weekend

Playgrounds across England will see a **31 percentage increase** in their usage throughout the second lockdown, according to new research from the Register of Play Inspectors International – the UK's governing body for examining, accrediting, and certificating playground inspectors.

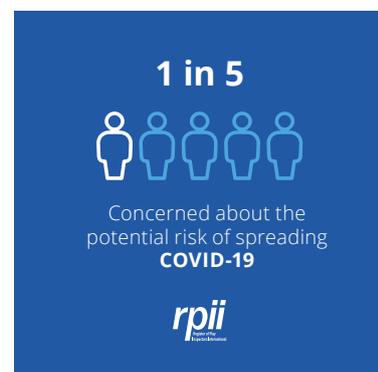
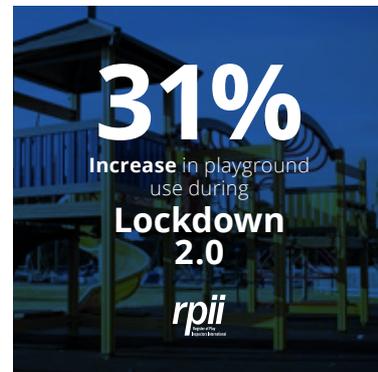
While indoor soft-plays, swimming pools, leisure centres and other indoor family entertainment destinations have been ordered to close, outdoor playgrounds are allowed to remain open throughout the lockdown period. This is a contrast to the first lockdown where all playgrounds were closed.

According to new research commissioned by the RPII, a further **30 percent** of people with children or responsible for looking after children in England visited their local playground over the first lockdown weekend, and **36 percent** are set to visit throughout the rest of the November and December lockdown period.

Despite **one in five (20 percent)** of those that visited a playground last weekend being concerned about how busy it was for the potential risk of spreading COVID, almost **three in four (71 percent)** of parents are set to visit again during the next few weeks of lockdown.

It's indoor leisure and entertainment that will bear the brunt economically of the lockdown as the research reveals that **16 percent** of those planning a playground visit were planning to do so because indoor leisure facilities such as a swimming pool, entertainment centre or indoor soft-play and cinemas were forced to close.

The RPII is calling for all parents and carers to enjoy playground visits safely during this lockdown surge, and for all playground owners and operators to ensure that their risk assessments have been updated to include this proposed heavy use, and that inspections are up to date.



Jon Dalton, Board Director of the RPII, said:

“We fully support the government decision to allow playgrounds to remain open during this second lockdown period. Playgrounds are a hugely valuable resource that offer so many benefits to our younger population, and even more so at a time when so many other leisure opportunities have been forced to shut their doors. It is important however that playground operators recognise that there is going to be a surge in the use of these areas that we would not normally expect at this time of year, as our research supports.

Playground operators will have a risk assessment in place that would traditionally recognise a drop in usage at this time of year and their inspection frequencies would be reduced in line with this, however during these unprecedented times we want to make all playground operators aware that this is not likely to be the case this year, and we are therefore recommending that risk assessments are updated and inspection frequencies are suitable for the anticipated levels of use that we now expect to see.”