**Design Principles**

The following design principles should be followed:

1. **Provide a variety of elements to accommodate a number of play forms (active to focused), and a wide range of development skills.**

2. **Provide linkages between the elements and flow through and around them to increase options for use.**

3. **Ensure that each element can be used in several ways, altering as the skill level develops.**

4. **Ensure safety without sacrificing play (comply with Australian Standards, provide safety design devices present on specific equipment. E.g. Toddler swing with belt, slides with full platform enclosures.**

5. **Incorporate art to combine cognitive and physical play.**

6. **Provide shapes, varied textural surfaces, colour and planting to add layers of sensory detail and an exciting complexity.**

7. **Ensure spatial diversity to accommodate children playing alone and small, large and family groups.**

8. **Provide a balance between parental supervision and independent play.**

9. **Ensure strong ties with the local community through integration in the concept, implementation of playground or referencing to history.**

**Play Design for Age Groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Type of play features</th>
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| 1-6 years | - Low platform heights.  
- Small scale structures with little challenge to gross motor skills. E.g. Ladders/stairs, bridges, tunnels, small slides.  
- Equipment that develops fine motor skills. E.g. Interactive activity panels, stationary balance beams.  
- Equipment that promotes role-play and imaginative - playing pretend, imagining. E.g. Shop front counters, cars, playhouses.  
- Safety design devices present on specific equipment. E.g. Toddler swing with belt, slides with full platform enclosures.  
- Equipment that promotes movement - running, jumping, sliding, crawling, rocking, shaking, riding. E.g. Spring toys, toddler swing.  
- Equipment that promotes social interaction and sensory play - exploring by small groups. E.g. sandpits, planting areas.  
- Structures provide for carer involvement and assistance in play. |
| 6-12 years | - Medium platform range.  
- Independent play equipment to provide physical challenge and test gross motor skills - learning by repeating activities, mastering skills. Spectators as well as performers. E.g. Climbing ropes, fireman poles, fitness equipment, swings.  
- Play equipment provides medium levels of risk with increased heights, open platforms, and increases the fear factor with speed through play facilities. E.g. flying foxes, track rides.  
- Circuits of play equipment with a variety of scales adjacent to kick-about areas.  
- Sporting equipment for individual or group play. More competitive and more independent play activities. Basketball court, hit up wall.  
- Equipment caters for active play and games with some quiet play. E.g. Hide outs, small enclosures.  
- Equipment designed for social play of groups of 2 - 5 children and social interaction. E.g. Hammock swing, hang out/meeting spaces.  
- Smaller nets and tower components of larger nets are a good example of physically and mentally challenging equipment.  
- Proprietors play equipment such as pedal-powered equipment with physical play value, which can be moderated, are typical of this age group. E.g. Pedal power. |
| 12 years -adolescent | - High platform range.  
- New proprietor play equipment for this age group tends to have subtle and subdued colours such as navy, gunmetal grey and maroon.  
- Play equipment challenges fine and gross motor skills - balance, strength and physical and mentally challenging equipment.  
- New equipment designed for adolescents provides high activity and caters for small groups to play at one time with small components. E.g. Large multi use climbing nets with balancing platforms and hanging around, bike riding, ball games, skateboarding.  
- Equipment should spatially challenge this age group, requiring decoding prior to use.  
- Designed activities for group or individual use. Individual preferences more pronounced. E.g. Rebound walls, basketball half courts.  
- Social hang out spaces with seating / shelters are associated with teenager play areas. Prefer not to be identified with smaller children. 'Image and style' of play equipment for this age group tends to have subtle and subdued colours such as navy, gunmetal grey and maroon.  
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**All Disabilities**

- Equipment that promotes movement and encourages upper and lower body movement. E.g. Horizontal ladder, spring toys which provide support on all sides to prevent fall.  
- Undersurfacing that allows user transfer. E.g. Sand  
- Interactive elements accessible at wheelchair height. E.g. Sand/water tables, tic tac toe panels.  
- Undersurfacing provides access for wheelchair users. E.g. Softpave Rubber.  
- Accessible entry points and appropriate aisle widths within play structure. E.g. Ramps connecting to accessible paths, transfer station, Aisles to accommodate wheelchairs and able bodied children, tactile pavement indicators.  
- Equipment that allows play with carer assistance. E.g. Dual free standing or embankment slides, spring toys with side car attachment, hammock swing.  
- Elements that promote sensory interaction. E.g. Chimes, speaker tubes, musical panels, textures, braille walls, planting.