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Are your swimmers climbing the walls? Aquatic professionals have turned to new products in an effort to attract and retain patrons as well as add “Fun” to their facilities. The aquatic climbing wall is one of these products. Aquatic climbing walls are becoming more popular across the US. The apparatus structure is attached to the tank side and deck of a pool; providing swimmers an opportunity to climb the wall over the water. It is important to establish safety guidelines for these structures in order to reduce the risk of injury. Operating guidelines should include: following any manufacturer recommendations, swimmer ability testing, swimmer restrictions, proper water depth, strong supervision with a dedicated lifeguard, restricting diving, and maintaining “splash” zones around and under the apparatus. Walls should be properly installed, angle over the water and be sized appropriately for the pool and water depth. Facility leaders should also check with their insurance provider prior to purchase and installation to ensure that coverage is available for the product. More information is available [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

It's Better to Miss One Game than the Whole Season according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)). The CDC has developed the [Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports](#) initiative to offer information about concussions and to help ensure the health and safety of young athletes. The *Heads Up* initiative provides important information on preventing, recognizing, and responding to a concussion for coaches, parents and athletes. A concussion is an injury that changes how the cells in the brain normally work. The potential for concussions is greatest in athletic environments where collisions are common. Concussions can occur, however in any organized or unorganized sport or recreational activity. As many as 3.8 million sports and recreation related concussions occur in the United States each year.

“Why can't we just get along?” Is a question discussed in a recent article by Melanie Lockwood Herman from the Nonprofit Risk Management Center ([NRMC](#)). She discusses how to mend broken fences in an organization and heal a toxic culture. Herman's article describes four common reasons that give rise to troubling workplace disputes that come from the July/August issue of *HR Magazine*. Herman goes on to discuss ways to build a healthy culture at your organization; these include: “When and why Conflict is a Force for Good”, “Take a look in the mirror”, “Pay close attention to non-verbal clues”, “Engage in collaborative and reflective listening” and how to “Embrace, don't bury conflict”. Read more [HERE](#).

Playgrounds are an important program element for many youth-serving organizations. As the busy summer program season winds down and preparations begin for the fall, facilities should be inspected for safety and security. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) publishes [Guidelines for Public Playground Safety](#), which can assist staff in properly reviewing their play ground facilities to ensure the safety of participants.

Did you see this in the previous E-news:

Adapt to summer high daytime temperatures. Staff, volunteers and summer program participants need to know how to prevent health problems caused by high temperatures. Organizations should provide heat stress training to staff and supervisors. Everyone should keep the following precautions in mind when spending time outdoor during daytime hours: keep hydrated (drink a glass of [water](#) every 15 to 30 minutes to prevent overheating, take breaks to cool down (at least a 10- or 15-minute break every two hours), reduce activities as the heat index rises and remember to adapt your pace to the weather. Read more [HERE](#). Also have staff check out [OSHA's Heat Safety Tool mobile app](#) to calculate the Heat Index for your location and get reminders about how to prevent heat illness every day. Review the [Beat the Heat](#) information for athletes.

Posting the Fire Diamond Can Help in Emergencies. Many facilities operated by nonprofit organizations regularly [store and use hazardous chemicals](#). Most common in facilities operating pools, these chemicals can pose a hazard to patrons, staff and emergency response personnel. Right to Know laws provide directive for communicating information about hazardous substances properly to the public and employees. Organizations can assist emergency response personnel by complying with local fire codes, OSHA hazard communication standards and the standards of the National Fire Protection Association ([NFPA](#)). Read more [HERE](#).

This Month's Topics:

Aquatic Climbing Walls
Concussion Prevention in Youth Sports
Workplace Culture
Playground Inspections
Managing the Heat Index
Fire Diamond Posting