



A Head for Insurance. A Heart for Nonprofits.

Special Event Guidelines: Bounce Houses

Bounce houses and other inflatables can be fun, but they can also be dangerous. Accidents are almost always a result of inattention or poor planning. The following guidelines will help your organization when renting a bounce house or inflatable for your special events.

BOUNCE HOUSE VENDOR

- Select a reputable vendor; price should not be your primary consideration. (In some states, bounce house companies are regulated.)
- Questions you should ask:
 - Are they insured? If not, this is not the vendor for you. **(NOTE: The Nonprofits Insurance Alliance Group requires that our member-insureds only contract with an insured bounce house company. The bounce house company must name the nonprofit as an additional insured on their general liability insurance policy.)**
 - Are they trained/experienced in inflatable operations?
 - ◆ Select a vendor that delivers and sets-up your bounce house. They are heavy, bulky, and awkward to move and setup. Leave this to the professionals.
 - What safety measures do they provide you with?
 - Do they provide supervision (an attendant) of the bounce house? (Most companies are going to drop it off and it's up to you to supervise the unit.)

BOUNCE HOUSE LOCATION

- Plan the 'spot' for your bounce house(s). (In some cases, this may be determined by your event venue.)
 - The area must be flat.
 - You will need at least 5 feet of space on all sides of the inflatable.
 - Make sure there are no overhanging branches or power lines that would be too close to the inflatable.
 - Clear the entire area of debris, including sticks, rocks and animal waste.
 - Know where any sprinkler lines, irrigation systems, gas, water and/or power lines are and have the locations marked. If you don't know where these are located, let the bounce house company know in advance as they will secure your unit with sandbags instead of stakes.

- Bouncers and other inflatables cannot be used in rainy weather. In addition, they are not safe to use if the winds exceed 15 miles per hour. There's nothing your bounce vendor can do if the weather gets bad, so be sure you know their cancellation/refund policy in the case of inclement weather.

BOUNCE HOUSE SET-UP

- Watch when your bounce house vendor sets up your unit(s):
 - A tarp should be placed underneath the bounce house.
 - The unit should be staked down or heavily weighted down with ground weights or sandbags.
 - The vendor should thoroughly inspect the bounce house once it is inflated to be sure there are no holes or tears in the unit.
 - Be sure your unit is fully inflated and not sagging anywhere.
 - The vendor MUST cover all operating and safety procedures verbally, and should leave you printed instructions as well. It is your responsibility to ask questions if you do not understand something.

BOUNCE HOUSE SAFETY

- Children must be supervised at all times.
 - Unsupervised children are more likely to attempt stunts that are very dangerous, which can result in head injuries and other injuries.
- Be sure all children (bouncers) are aware of the safety rules prior to being allowed to enter the Bounce House.
 - Bouncers should have fun, but it needs to be safe fun. Be sure they know they will be removed and no longer allowed to play if they do not follow the rules.
- Compatible age groups must play on the unit at the same time. Age groups should not be mixed. Different sized children should not be mixed.
- NO NOT EXCEED the maximum number of bouncers at any time. Units should have this information clearly posted near the entrance and your Bounce House vendor should advise you of the maximums when dropping off the unit.

For reference, the maximum number of children allowed in a standard 13x13 bounce house is:

Ages 3 – 8	8 children maximum (Children under the age of 3 should be kept out of the unit)
Ages 9 – 13	6 children maximum
Ages 14 – 17	4 children maximum

- Bouncers should not sit or lay down while others are bouncing around them, as a jumping child could fall down on top of a sitting or laying child.
- All bouncers must remove shoes, glasses, jewelry, and anything else that may harm the Bounce House or other bouncers. All bouncers must empty their pockets.
- No flips, somersaults or horseplay. Bouncers should not run and/or bounce against the walls. No running or jumping through the door on the Bounce House. No climbing or hanging from the interior or exterior of the Bounce House.
- No food or drink inside or near (within 10 feet) of the Bounce House. Be sure no children are chewing gum or have candy in their mouth.
- Help bouncers exit from the Bounce House. The step leading out of a Bounce House is inflatable and bouncy too, and getting out is awkward. This is the most common area for scraped knees and elbows.

- Keep everyone away from the blower at all times.

Should the Bounce house begin to deflate:

Be sure to review appropriate steps to take with your Bounce House vendor at delivery.

- If the motor has stopped, check the cord connection at the outlet and at the motor. If your unit is running on a generator, it may have run out of fuel.
- Check the air intake on the side of the motor for blockage. Check both tubes on the back of the Bounce House for snugness and retie if necessary.
- Other than scaring some small children, a deflating bounce house shouldn't hurt children who are inside. If you can not immediately reinflate the Bounce House, reposition the unit so the door is not covered and have the children squirm their way out the door. (Some children will consider this an extra added adventure, so you may have to go in after some of them to get them to make their way out.)
- If the Bounce House deflates or you experience any other problems with the equipment, immediately call your Bounce House vendor.

Accountability in nonprofit organizations is more than a good stewardship of funds. It includes delivering our products and services while protecting people and property.

We believe that risk management is the cornerstone of accountability in any organization. To support that belief and to help our member-insureds avoid claims, we offer a wide range of educational and loss prevention resources highly subsidized or free of charge. Visit the Member Resource area of our website for more information on all of the resources available to you.

If you have questions or need assistance, please contact our Director of Loss Control at 800-359-6422 or via email at losscontrol@insurancefornonprofits.org