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## Children injured, one fatally in recent bouncy castle accidents



You may have read of the [bouncy castle incident](#) in North Yorkshire on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2011. Three children were injured, one seriously when the bouncy castle they were playing on broke away from its anchoring in strong winds and was carried through the air before settling around a telegraph pole.

The bouncy castle was erected in the exposed rear garden of a hotel where the children and their families were attending a christening party. At the time of the incident the wind was gusting at around 40mph.

This incident comes only weeks after an 8 year old girl, Amy Byrne, was killed in a similar incident in which high winds caused the bouncy castle on which she was playing to lift, and Amy to fall. In this incident the bouncy castle had been erected at Amy's home where the family were celebrating Amy's first communion.

The incident in North Yorkshire is now being investigated by local environmental health officers and the Health and Safety Executive. This case has implications for businesses and organisations which provide play equipment for use by members of the public as it is their responsibility to ensure the equipment is maintained, set up and used correctly. This will include closing attractions where weather conditions indicate there is a risk of equipment failure and injury to users.

In the recent summer newsletter we highlighted the issues to consider when planning summer events in parishes some of which may include the hire of a bouncy castle. Bouncy castles, or other play inflatables are normally a safe and effective way for children to have fun and exercise at the same time but you must ensure that:

1. The equipment is properly manufactured and maintained.
2. The equipment is properly operated (location, pressure, anchoring, weather conditions etc).
3. Good supervision.

PIPA and ADIPS are the only two play inflatable inspection schemes recognised by the Health and Safety Executive. For more information on these schemes and on safety tips for using bouncy castles go to [www.pipa.org.uk](http://www.pipa.org.uk)