

Opinion: Stop telling me my active daughter might get hurt

By Leslie Kendall Dye, Washington Post

At school pickup, I stand outside the chain-link fence that separates the kindergarten playground from the parents. Our 5-year-olds walk in orderly lines from the building to the yard. They blink in the afternoon sun, disoriented after many hours indoors.

The bell rings and, freed from their teachers, the children run with sudden energy to the yard's small jungle gyms. The gate swings open to usher us in. Some kids enjoy the slides, others play hopscotch or draw on the concrete with chalk, and a few curl into their parents' or babysitters' laps to release the tensions of the day.

My child runs straight for the 15-foot fence and begins scaling it. Picture a cross between Spider-Man and the Flash, and you have my daughter. I consider it my greatest achievement that I have never lost her; her agility is matched only by her speed. I often place a large red bow in her hair as a visual tracking device. It helps me spot her dangling from trees or hanging upside down from scaffolding. Once we leave our apartment, I am always trying to catch up with her.

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