

## Kids play the natural way.

*“Sand—Children are intrigued by sand play. They dig, sift, build, pour, and feel it. They pretend with it and explore how it moves.” Kidsafe NSW.*

Over the years, The Hills Bark Blower has ensured the availability of natural softfall products that are tested and certified to Australian Standard 4422:2016 and before that, Australian Standard 4422:1996. This testing provides options for Local Councils, Playground Designers, Early Childhood Centres and Primary Schools to enable them to create best practice in design for their play spaces.



In the latest Kidsafe NSW newsletter January 2020, there are a few softfall topics explored that are vital to happy, healthy play for children. We'd like to share a couple.

### **Beat the Heat:**

Tests have been carried out on under surfacing in Western Sydney to assess heat impact on children.

One article cited in the Kidsafe NSW newsletter, <https://theconversation.com/materials-that-make-heat-worse-for-our-kids-demand-a-rethink-by-designers-93274>, mentions the heat some synthetic under surfacing can reach.

Kidsafe NSW refers to the research. *“Playground Surfacing: Rubber and synthetic grass playground surfacing have been known to cause burn injuries to the soles of children's feet on scorching hot days. Dark coloured rubber surfacing retains heat. Research has found that on low humidity, hot sunny days, dark coloured surfaces can exceed 60°C.”*

This article has some suggestions on how to combat the problem synthetic softfall presents such as ensuring shade availability. Another option is to install natural softfall as an alternative.

The Hills Bark Blower concentrates on providing certified sand and mulch under surfacing for designers looking to develop a cooler and more environmental play space.

### **Natural Play better for children's mental and physical health:**

*“The importance of creating a natural play environment is essential for children's development. It can assist with developing children's imaginative and social skills; encourages a greater level of physical activity; and allows them to experience and deal with moderate risks. Natural environments encourage children to explore and interact with the natural world and use their imagination to invent new play experiences.” Kidsafe NSW.*

The Hills Playbark, The Hills Forest Playmulch and The Hill Playground Sand are all tested and developed specially to provide a safe, certified natural play solution.

To find out more about Kidsafe NSW, visit their website – [www.kidsafe.org.au](http://www.kidsafe.org.au)

To find out more about The Hills Bark Blower natural softfall products, visit [www.barkblower.com.au/playgrounds](http://www.barkblower.com.au/playgrounds) or call (02) 96542288.