

Top 5 Reasons why you should NOT attach shade canopies to your playground structure

In an effort to increase their sales revenue and take advantage of the public's desire for protective shade, there has been a trend among playground equipment manufacturers to offer shade canopies as a roof attachment component on their playground structures. Below are the top 5 reasons why this is a really BAD idea:

- 1. They are not as strong as Shade Systems products** – Free-standing, full-size shade structures as manufactured by Shade Systems are engineered to meet stringent wind ratings which comply with the strictest national building codes. The playground equipment support columns to which a shade component is attached are simply not strong enough to resist such wind forces, which means the uplift exerted by the shade canopy can damage expensive playground equipment and its rubber surfacing.
- 2. They are not easy to remove for a storm or for the winter season** – Only Shade Systems free-standing shade products come standard with our patented Turn-N-Slide™ easy canopy fastening and removal system, the only one of its kind with a published 10-year warranty and the longest successful track record on playgrounds nationwide.
- 3. They provide very little shade** - Attached canopies provide only a small fraction of the shade that a free-standing shade structure provides. And perched as they are high above the play structure, that tiny bit of shade oftentimes lands away from the playground equipment. For example, slides are the part of the playground where many burn injuries occur, but rarely do attached shades provide enough coverage to protect the entire slide from the sun's intense heat baking its surface. Only a free-standing shade structure provides *complete* protection from the sun's dangerous U.V. rays for children on all parts of the playground equipment.
- 4. They can cost nearly as much as a free-standing shade structure** – It is a sad fact that many municipalities sacrifice children's well-being by choosing playground equipment with attached shade canopy roofs solely to save money. While they may be slightly less expensive than a full shade cover that's separate from the play equipment, the smaller attached shades actually cost much more *per square foot*, and their marginally lower cost, if any, hardly warrants the huge loss of sun protection which results from such an inadequate solution.
- 5. Playground equipment warranty may be voided** – Some unscrupulous shade companies offer to attach a shade roof component to your playground equipment *after the fact*. Such modification without the play equipment manufacturer's consent will usually void its warranty, and worse still you may not receive the protection of its product liability coverage either in the event of injury. If wind forces cause the attached fabric roof to fail and cause damage or injury, the playground company's product liability insurance may not cover the damages since their product was modified from its original purpose.

