

Let's sue those who took away our seesaws

By Rick Maier

I sailed toward the sky as my childhood friend Russell forced down his end of the seesaw; then I fell several feet, crashing to the ground when he jumped off. It took a few minutes for me to recover and get back on the seesaw, but I learned something about Russell that day, and from then on I always kept my legs "on guard" when we rode the seesaw together.

If that incident happened to some kid today, Russell's family and the playground owner could expect to get sued for millions of dollars, and the equipment manufacturer would be facing a class action lawsuit. But it can't happen today because there are few, if any seesaws around anymore.

Unfortunately a few kids got hurt, so their well-intentioned parents, represented by highly principled council, found sympathetic judges to rid the world of those treacherous teeter-totters.

Today, instead of playing on swings, sliding boards, jungle gyms, merry-go-rounds and sandboxes, our kids climb through plastic tubes in padded chambers. Few, if any activities are shared.

If we continue to sue risky activities out of existence, you can put bikes, automobiles and sports on the endangered list. Might as well prohibit that perilous running and skipping, too.

Now some genius is claiming millions of dollars because fast food made him fat. When are we going to stand up and say enough is enough? More and more people today blame others when they make a lousy decision and expect to be compensated whenever they experience some bad luck.

We can blame some of the problems on attorneys who make fortunes "protecting the weak", bureaucrats who tie us in knots with rules, and judges who re-write the laws of our elected representatives. Caps on damage awards, more safe harbors and penalties for frivolous claims would help, but the solution rests with all of us.

Decades ago, you could argue that people needed protecting, but like all things, the pendulum (or seesaw) has swung too far the other way. America is quickly changing from a frontier for inventors and over-achievers, to a politically correct state of victims controlled by litigators.

We have warnings and restrictions on everything, as if we're not smart enough to know that cigarettes are unhealthy, balls may enter the seating area at a ballgame and hammers

can cause injuries. I'm tired of being treated like I'm stupid and incapable of teaching my children to stay safe.

Hey kids: hot coffee will burn if you spill it on your skin.

Who do you think pays for all the silly regulations and legal awards that we read about every week in the paper? You do...through higher prices, fewer choices and diminished freedoms. Rapidly rising insurance premiums buried in the cost of everything from power tools to prescriptions to college tuition are redistributing the wealth of our nation from hard working citizens to a few people who have the nerve and the opportunity to blame someone else with deeper pockets.

If we don't begin to stop the nonsense soon, no one will be able to afford the insurance to manufacture a ladder, develop a new drug or deliver a baby.

We need to openly ridicule the frivolous, penalize the greedy and win back control of who runs this nation. We must demand that our elected representatives put some common sense back into the system. But we must be patient - it took a long time to get in this fix, and it will take a while to regain some balance without threatening the individual liberties we all treasure.

We may have limited our kids' activities on the playground, but all of us grownups need to be accountable for our actions, accept the consequences of our decisions, and understand that accidents sometimes happen.

Stupid Warning Labels:

On a cardboard windshield sun shade: Warning: Do not drive with sun shade in place

On a Magic 8 Ball: Not advised for use as a home pregnancy test

On a roll of LifeSavers: Not for use as a flotation device

On a refrigerator: Refrigerate after opening

On a piano: Harmful or fatal if swallowed

On children's alphabet blocks: Letters may be used to construct words deemed offensive

Source: www.joke-archives.com