

[Comments](#) | Recommended

## Child dies in accident at indoor playground

07:10 PM PST on Monday, December 17, 2007

JANE MCCARTHY / KING 5 News



Jacob Pierce's death has been ruled an accident.

### [Indoor playground did not have permit](#)

CASTLE ROCK, Wash. - A 3-year-old boy was killed at an indoor playground Saturday after two men fell on top of him.

Jacob Pierce's death has been ruled an accident. A lot of people say it's just a terrible fluke, but Jacob's mother believes it could have been prevented.

"You want to wake up from the nightmare, and the nightmare you'll never wake up from," said Rebecca Pierce, who is struggling to come to grips with life without her son. He died Saturday while at a birthday party at Hoppin' Houses, an inflatable play center in Castle Rock.

Two men playing "king of the hill" on an inflatable didn't notice little Jacob.

"A little girl picked him up and set him in there and from what my niece saw, the guys rolled down that hill and knocked him out and somebody landed on his head and crushed his head," said Pierce.



Jacob Pierce

Pierce claims no one at Hoppin' Houses ever gave the group a rundown of the rules and she believes her son's death could've been prevented if there had been more employee supervision.

"You need to have more than just an 18 year old boy sitting at the counter," she said.

Alan Morihiro owns Jump Planet, an inflatable play center in Bothell, which is entirely unrelated to the Castle Rock business. He says at his facility, kids and adults must have a safety orientation and 3-4 staff members supervise each group.

"My staff here they act sort of like lifeguards would at a swimming pool so if there's anything that's inappropriate they're making sure that it stops," he said.

Inflatables are actually considered amusement rides and are inspected annually by the federal government.



A three-year-old boy died after an accident at Hoppin' Houses, an indoor playground in Castle Rock, WA.

"The units themselves are very safe and with proper supervision everyone can have a really good time here," said Morihiro.

While Jacob's mother plans on pressing forth with charges against the Hoppin' Houses, she also puts some of the blame squarely on herself.

"I was in charge of that child. I was in charge of watching that child," she said.

Inflatables have capacity and weight limits, and many of them do accommodate adults.

Jacob's mother did sign a liability release form before entering the center, which is standard for such play centers.

Officials said Hoppin' Houses never had a permit to operate as an amusement facility and has been closed until further notice.