

**Event Type:** High school graduation

**Incident:** Fall from height

**Narrative**

On Thursday, March 29, 2008, a high school was celebrating graduation at a community center in Jacksonville, FL. The high school graduation party included games, activities, interactive play equipment, food and more. The graduation party was put on by school parents and partnerships with local businesses. Prior to the graduation party a rental company had spent the day dropping off and installing the inflatable amusement devices. A 19' inflatable slide called the Titanic was placed indoors on a hardwood gym floor. The rental company provided a rental agreement to a parent that had called and reserved this device. The agreement was briefly discussed and signed. The rental company agent left with the agreement in hand.

The party started around 7:00 pm. At around 9:30 pm catastrophe struck. A total of 26 students made their way to the top of the Titanic inflatable slide. While at the top of the device it started to sway. The students decided to enhance the swaying by moving side-to-side with the device. The device eventually tilted significantly enough to collapse. All 26 students fell off the device. 6 of the students required hospitalization. 2 of the students eventually died from head injuries.

**Problem statements**

- Is an inflatable considered an amusement ride?
- Should the device have been placed indoors on a hardwood floor?
- Are there any standards or regulations for amusement rides and devices? Where can you find those standards? Who should be aware of the standards and why?
- What was the responsibility of the rental company? Should they have provided an operator? Does the device require an operator? Why or why not?
- Could the rental company train one of the parents to be an operator? What should that training involve? Does that qualify them to be an amusement ride/device operator?
- Why did the device tip over? Could something have prevented it from tipping over? What and how?
- Should an inspection of the device have taken place? Who should have inspected it?
- Who is liable for the incident? Why?
- Does a signed contract waiving liability from the rental company hold-up? Why or why not?
- Who should notify the injured student's parents?
- What should you do for the families and students involved? Who should do it?
- Do you have to contact anybody regarding this incident? Who? How long do you have to contact them?
- Should the rental company have an insurance policy? How much and what kind?