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## Soon, girls to have separate playgrounds

**Aloysius Xavier Lopez**

The Chennai Corporation, in a somewhat controversial initiative, will soon build separate playgrounds for girls in public parks.

The response to this had been mixed, with some welcoming the creation of play infrastructure, and others criticising the civic body for the segregation of children.

The design for the first such facility in Kodambakkam with separate enclosures for girls and boys has been prepared.

At least 11 grounds of land, in the total area of 33 grounds, will have a badminton court, volleyball court and shuttle court exclusively for girls.

The piece of land adjoining the girls' playground will be earmarked for boys. This plot will have a well-designed football ground, volleyball ground and basketball courts for boys.

However, both boys and girls will have access to a separate landscaped park that will also be developed on the plot. Students of schools in the neighbourhood will be able to use the facilities with trainers.

“We welcome the move to create separate playgrounds for girls. Such facilities will promote sports among girls in each neighbourhood. Teenagers will be able to practice without any fear of harassment. We are planning to ask for more such playgrounds for girls,” said A. Ezhilarasi, a Corporation councillor from Ennore.

“Generally, we don't see girls playing sports at most of the existing Corporation playgrounds in the city. Girls from wealthy neighbourhoods access playgrounds maintained by private agencies. This move will ensure all girls have access to playgrounds,” said M.M. Babu, a councillor in Saidapet.

“Certain games are very popular with girls while others are popular with boys. However, this move will not help in the overall development of a child’s personality. If the Corporation is developing separate playgrounds with a vision of just separating boys and girls that needs to be condemned” said P. Manorama, former chairperson of the Child Welfare Committee.