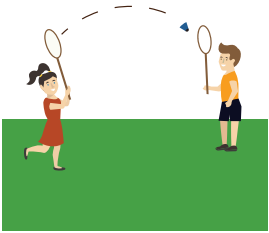


LET'S TALK

Active School Recess

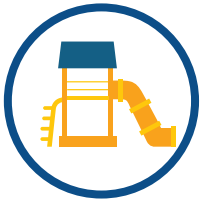


We want kids to be healthy, successful and safe especially when they are in school. Recess has always been a critical outlet for kids to be physically active and practice important social skills like sharing, taking turns and following rules. Unfortunately, as the pace of home and school life continues to accelerate, there is a growing perception that recess is optional, and that time could be used for “more important” activities or lessons.

42%

Recess is often a child’s only opportunity to be physically active during the school week. In fact, a study by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation found that **42 percent** of U.S. schoolchildren get the majority of their total daily exercise during recess — more than in physical education or after-school programs.

THE ENDLESS BENEFITS OF ACTIVE SCHOOL RECESS



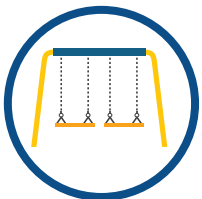
EQUAL PLAY FOR ALL

Active recess aims to engage all students in physical activity by offering the option to participate in various games and activities.



ACTIVE PLAY FOR ACTIVE MINDS

Recess provides an important mental break from the day. For some kids, this might account for most of their daily exercise. However, this break for physical activity is just as beneficial intellectually as it is physically. After 20 minutes of physical activity, students have improved mental focus and have tested better in reading, spelling and math. They were also more likely to read above their grade level.



MOST ACTIVE OUTDOORS

Research indicates that children are more active during free play at outdoor recess than in physical education classes.



REAL STORIES OF MINNESOTANS PULLING TOGETHER

Great Expectations, a K-8 charter school in Grand Marais, saw an opportunity to combine physical activity with something its middle school students considered a top priority—connecting with one another. A walk-and-talk trail that loops around the school building is an ideal place for students to share and visit with one another while being active. Staff also use the trail for walking meetings.

STEPS FOR ACTION



✓ KNOW THE POLICIES

Learn about your school district's wellness policy and your school's recess practices. If they don't include options for active recess, talk to neighbors, friends and school staff about adding it to the existing policy, and work with the school to ensure it is implemented.

✓ START A CONVERSATION

Communicate with your local school, letting them know you think of active recess as a priority. If they aren't aware of the health and learning benefits associated with active recess, discuss that with them.

✓ JOIN/FORM A COUNCIL

Get involved in your local school health advisory councils. Your school doesn't have one? Work with other parents to establish one.

✓ LEARN THE CURRICULUM

Work with your school's physical education teacher to build on games that kids already know, and suggest that those games be offered during recess.

✓ SUPPORT ACTIVE INDOOR RECESS OPTIONS

Since much of the school year takes place during our colder months, many Minnesota kids spend recess time indoors. Find out if your school has indoor recess kits so kids can still have the option to be physically active, no matter what Mother Nature throws our way.

DID YOU KNOW?

The timing of recess can play a significant role in a child's overall health and behavior during the school day. Research has shown that having recess before lunch can result in more consumption of fruits and vegetables, less visits to the nurse's office, and more attentive students in the afternoon.

Resources:

<http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/media-center/reports/706-the-learning-connection-what-you-need-to-know-to-ensure-your-kids-are-healthy-and-ready-to-learn>

http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/storage/Recess_Moves_A_Toolkit_for_Quality_Recess.pdf

http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin/admin389.shtml

http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2015-01/cfb-trs011215.php

http://publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/Recess%20Wellness%20Policy%20Final_0.pdf

<http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2015/01/a-more-nutritious-school-day-through-recess/384526/>