

# Re-Imagined Recess and Classroom-Based Physical Activity



## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CAN:

- improve strength, endurance and coordination
- help reduce obesity and chronic diseases
- strengthen bones
- enhance academic achievement
- increase self-esteem
- improve behavior



**60 MINS  
A DAY**

is the recommended daily physical activity for children and adolescents.

## Recess/ Informal Physical Activity

Not only is recess critical in providing students a needed break from their structured school day, it can also improve their physical, social, and emotional well-being and enhance their learning in the classroom.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR FREE PLAY TO ENGAGE IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, AND TO PRACTICE SOCIAL SKILLS ARE ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT DURING THE COVID-19.**

### BENEFITS OF RECESS

- builds peer to peer relationship
- reduces disruptive behavior in the classroom
- improves cognitive performance
- reduces stress in students
- improves on -task behavior in the classroom
- fosters lifetime physical activity

### STRATEGIES FOR SCHOOLS TO CONSIDER TO IMPROVE RECESS

1. Make leadership decisions
2. Communicate and enforce behavioral and safety expectations
3. Create an environment supportive of physical activity during recess
4. Engage the school community to support recess
5. Gather information on recess

## Classroom-Based Physical Activity

Classroom-based physical activity improves students' concentration and on-task behaviors, motivation and engagement in the learning process, and academic performance. Additionally, providing opportunities for classroom-based physical activity can help reduce stress and anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic.

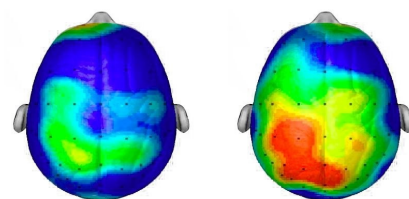
## ACTIVE KIDS LEARN BETTER

Classroom physical activity is any physical activity that takes place in the classroom and is in addition to physical education and recess. It serves as a strategic opportunity to promote an active lifestyle while boosting concentration, engagement, and academic performance.

### MOVEMENT IN THE CLASSROOM

- Integrate movement while teaching content across curriculum
- Do not replace PE and recess with classroom physical activity.
- Provide physical activity breaks outside of planned academic instruction.
- Use classroom physical activity as a way to reinforce skills learned in PE
- Make sure that there is appropriate and adequate equipment for physical activity lessons.
- Do not withhold classroom physical activity from students as punishment.

Composite of 20 student brains taking the same test



After sitting quietly

After 20 minute walk

Research/Scan compliments of Dr. Chuck Hillman, University of Illinois

Special thanks to Josh Grant,  
WV Department of Education

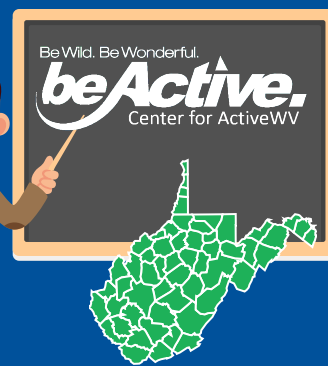


#### SOURCES:

1. SHAPE America –School Reentry Considerations: K–12 Physical Education, Health Education, and Physical Activity; 2020.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Strategies for Classroom Physical Activity in Schools, 2018.
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Integrate Classroom Physical Activity in Schools: A Guide for Putting Strategies Into Practice. 2018.

# Re-Imagined Recess and Classroom-Based Physical Activity

It is critical that physical activity continues during COVID-19 school instruction.



## Recess/ Informal Physical Activity Considerations

Recess helps students practice social skills, cooperation, following rules, problem-solving, negotiation, sharing, and communication. Opportunities for free play, to engage in physical activity, and to practice social skills are especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic.

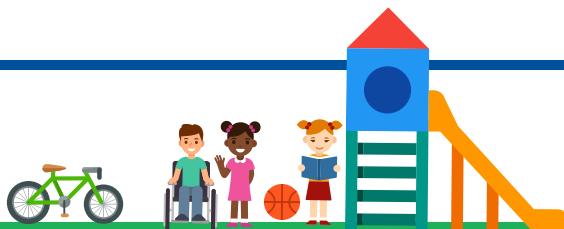
- Evaluate available indoor and outdoor spaces that can be used for recess.
- Select spaces for recess where local guidelines can be followed.
- Identify several locations where students can be active and minimize crowding.
- Implement a recess schedule to help prevent over crowding and maintain physical distancing.
- Give students guidance and practice how to safely go to recess areas while physically distancing.
- Practice hand washing and sanitizing before and after recess.
- Help students identify how to safely physical distance by clearly designating areas to distance.
- Encourage games and activities that do not require physical contact or for students to be close to each other.
- Evaluate the use of recess play equipment and disinfect the equipment that is shared by multiple students.
- Do not withhold recess as punishment for a student.



## Classroom-Based Physical Activity Considerations

Classroom-based physical activity improves students' concentration and on-task behaviors, motivation and engagement in the learning process, and academic performance. Additionally, providing opportunities for classroom-based physical activity can help reduce stress and anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Evaluate available classroom space and outdoor spaces that can be used for physical activity and active learning .
- Give students guidance on how to safely participate in classroom based physical activity while still maintaining physical distancing.
- Promote mindfulness activities to support student abilities to cope with stress and anxiety.
- Encourage activities that do not require physical contact or for students to be close to each other.
- Evaluate the use of recess play equipment and disinfect the equipment that is shared by multiple students.
- Focus on activities that require little or no equipment and that require no physical contact or close proximity to each other.
- Limit the use of equipment passed between multiple students in a class.
- Clean equipment after each use.
- Wash hands before and after physical activity time.



### SOURCES: