

Recess Recommendations

National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE)

It is the position of the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) that all elementary school children should be provided with at least one daily period of recess of at least 20 minutes in length.

- Recess is not viewed as a reward but as a necessary educational support component for all children. Therefore, students should not be denied recess so they can complete class work or as a means of punishment.
- Recess does not replace physical education classes. Physical education provides sequential instruction to enhance the development of motor skills, movement concepts, and physical fitness. Recess provides unstructured play opportunities that allow children to engage in physical activity.
- Recess is not scheduled immediately before or after physical education class.
- Quality physical education and daily recess are components of the elementary school educational experience that enable students to develop physical competence, health related fitness, personal and social responsibility, and enjoyment of physical activity so that they will be physically active for a lifetime.
- Administering or withholding physical activity as a form of punishment and/or behavior management is an inappropriate practice.

SHAPE America

- Elementary Recess
 - Daily scheduled period of time allocated for students as a break from academic rigor. Typically students are allowed to move outside to engage in physical and social activities when weather permits.
 - Recess shall be scheduled before lunch periods.
 - Recess shall be supervised by staff trained in facilitating active play.
 - Require inclusion of recess in master school schedule.

Benefits of Recess Before Lunch

- Students waste 27% to 40% less food
- Students consume as much as 35% more calcium and protein during lunch
- Decreased number of nurse visits for headaches and stomachaches
- Decreased discipline referrals
- Students are calmer and ready to learn and stay on-task

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Resources

Benefits of Recess Before Lunch: Fact Sheet. (NA). Creating a Healthier Classroom. Hamilton County Coordinated School Health Committee. Retrieved from
<http://www.peacefulplaygrounds.com/download/lunch/benefits-recess-before-lunch-facts.pdf>

Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP) Policy Continuum. (NA). Retrieved from
<http://www.shapeamerica.org/advocacy/resources/upload/CSPAP-Policy-Continuum-2-10-12final.pdf>

National Association for Sport and Physical Education. (2009). Physical activity used as punishment and/or behavior management [Position statement]. Reston, VA: Author. Retrieved from
<http://www.shapeamerica.org/advocacy/positionstatements/pa/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&pageid=4737>

National Association for Sport and Physical Education. (2006). Recess for elementary school students [Position statement]. Reston, VA: Author. Retrieved from
<http://www.shapeamerica.org/advocacy/positionstatements/pa/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&pageid=4630>