

# 10 Reasons Recess is so Important



Peaceful  
Playgrounds®

Melinda Bossenmeyer, Ed.D.

## 10 Reasons Why Recess is So Important

### By Melinda Bossenmeyer

1) Recess serves as a necessary break from the rigors of concentrated, academic challenges in the classroom. It also offers cognitive, social, emotional, and physical benefits that may not be fully appreciated when a decision is made to diminish it. *Pediatrics*, Dec. 31, 2012.

#### Cognitive Benefits

2) Several studies demonstrate that recess, whether performed indoors or outdoors, made children more attentive and more productive in the classroom *Jarrett, O. J. Education Research*, 1998.

3) Recess contributes to optimal cognitive processing and a break from academic instruction when interspersed between academic blocks of instruction required by concentrated instruction. *Pellegrino AD. Recess: Its role in Education Development* 205.

#### Social and Emotional Benefits

4) Children gain the opportunity to practice social skills and role-play with peers at recess when at recess. *National Association of Early Childhood Specialist in State Departments of Education, American Education Research Journal. Importance of Play* 2011.

5) Through play at recess, children learn valuable communication skills, including negotiation, cooperation, sharing, problem solving, coping skills, such as perseverance and self-control. *National Association of Sport and Physical Education. Physical Activity for Children*. 2004.

6) Recess also offers a child a necessary and socially structured means for managing stress by adapting and adjusting to the complex school environment. *Bjorklund DF, Brown R Physical play and cognitive development: integrating activity, cognition, and education. Child Dev*. 1998

7) Recess allows a student time to rest, play, imagine, think, move, and socialize. It can encourage creativity and problem solving. *Sibley B, Etnier J. The relationship between physical activity and cognition in children. Pediatrics Exercise Science*. 2003.

#### Physical Benefits

8) The benefits of physical activity and fitness made available at recess contribute to a child's overall health and well-being. *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Recess Rules*. Sept. 2011

9) Recess contributes to the recommended 60 minutes per day of physical activity for children, which helps in reducing sedentary behaviors with TV, computers, and video games. *Centers for*



*Disease Control and Prevention. Education and Community-Based Programs. Healthy People 2010. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office; 2000.*

10) The American Academy of Pediatrics believes that “recess is a crucial and necessary component of a child’s development and, as such, it should not be withheld for punitive or academic reasons.”