

Recess on the Playground: How to Support Students & Supervisors

Interventions to Support Successful Recess Time

1. Active Supervision
2. Skill Development
3. Acknowledgement system

Active Supervision

4 key components:

1. MOVEMENT – constant, random, strategic
 - target known problem areas/activities
 2. SCANNING – constant, strategic
 - pay attention to precursor behaviours to misbehaviour
 3. POSITIVE CONTACT – interactions that are positive, specific, brief
 - relationship building
 4. POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT – immediate, contingent on behaviour, consistent, high rate
 - behaviour changing
- Most important in **Nonclassroom settings** (hallway, playground, gym/assemblies)
 - More space, less structure, lower student: teacher ratio, less well developed relationships

Skill Development

1. Location Based (slide, swings, sliding hill)
2. Activity Based (soccer, tag, hide & seek)
3. Routine Based (asking for help, lining up at bell)

Teaching Skills – options:

- School wide (or primary and intermediate) Playground Day/Afternoon- as often as needed
 - Regular supervisors help with/lead the development of expectations for each location or activity
- Gym Time
 - Teaching the games the students are playing at recess
- Class time
 - Daily review of games/expectations by classroom teacher before EVERY recess (e.g. for 1 5-day week)
 - Review games – Playground jeopardy!
- Individual teaching
 - Small group instruction about games and practicing games

Acknowledgement System

Example from an elementary school



Their plan – reteach recess expectations, train staff on active supervision (scan, move, interact), and implement the “Playground Challenge.” Each class got a link in the chain for each recess period without an Office Referral, and when the link reached the ground, that class got an extra recess.

This display was right on way to playground – served as a reminder (a pre-correction) and encouragement for prosocial behaviour.