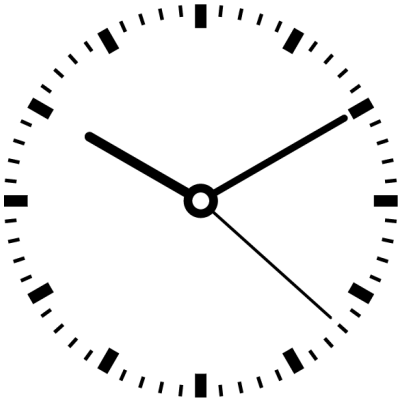
DASH NY



TIME TO PLAY

IMPROVING HEALTH AND ACADEMICS THROUGH RECESS IN NEW YORK ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

A Mandatory Daily Active Recess Policy Implementation Guide

Monica Chierici, Elyse Powell, Rachel Manes

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Why mandatory daily active recess?

Daily physical activity helps reduce the risk of obesity, promotes academic performance and mental ability, and also provides social benefits for children in elementary school. However, many children in New York State are not achieving the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity.[1] Approximately 33% of children in New York State are overweight or obese and a national study found that 58% of children ages 6-11 do not meet the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity.[2] Because the vast majority of New York elementary schools are not meeting the physical education (PE) requirement of offering 120 minutes per week,[3] there is an opportunity to provide physical activity through recess. A mandatory daily active recess policy provides all the benefits associated with being physically active by requiring that daily active recess be included as part of the daily curriculum. This guide will walk you through the steps needed to implement a policy that will ensure daily active recess in elementary schools.

How should this guide be used?

This policy implementation guide was produced as an informational resource for parents, teachers, school officials, and physical activity advocates interested in improving physical activity among students in K-5.

This guide is intended to be a tool that supports advocacy, planning, and implementation of daily active recess policy for schools. It can be used to help advocates build interest and educate stakeholders on the benefits of daily active recess. The information provided can also assist in each step of planning and implementing of recess policy.

Inside you will find:

a. Background information on mandatory daily active recess and evidence that can be used to make the case for a recess policy in elementary schools.

b. Implementation steps providing helpful tips on who to partner with, developing advocacy strategies, and how to put a mandatory daily active recess policy into practice.

c. Common barriers and possible solutions to help advocates address potential issues from the beginning.

d. Case studies of two implementation examples and three state laws that demonstrate different ways to implement a mandatory daily active recess policy and illustrate some creative solutions to common problems.

Background:

What is mandatory daily active recess?

Mandatory daily active recess is a policy approach to purposefully establish recess as a time for students to engage in physically active free play or structured games.[4] The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and US. Department of Health and Human Services 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines recommend that all children get 60 minutes of daily physical activity. To help meet this recommendation, the National Association of Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) recommends that all elementary school students be provided with at least one daily session of recess for at least 20 minutes.[5] The goal of mandatory daily active recess is to ensure there is a daily break from classroom instruction during which students have the opportunity to be physically active. Meeting this goal would involve allotting time for daily recess while providing the staff, equipment, and space that encourages physically active, free or structured play.

It should be noted that this time is not intended to replace, nor can it be applied towards, the New York State Education Department's PE requirements of 120 minutes per week. Physical education must be taught by a certified teacher who provides instruction according to New York State PE standards. However, recess need not be overseen by such personnel.

What are the benefits of mandatory daily active recess?

Mandatory daily active recess provides a broad array of health benefits. Active recess can account for as much one third of a child's recommended daily physical activity.[6] Regular physical activity reduces the risk of obesity and other chronic diseases.[7] Preventing obesity is important because overweight children have a 70-80% chance of remaining overweight throughout their lives, which means early

development of positive lifelong health habits is an important obesity prevention strategy.[8,9] Physical activity can also promote bone and muscular health as well as cardiorespiratory fitness in children.[10]

Regular activity also promotes improved academic performance and cognitive skills. Research has demonstrated that improved physical fitness is associated with better performance on standardized tests and higher grades.[11,12] An intervention study found that providing overweight children with 40 minutes of physical activity increased cognitive scores.[13] A meta-analysis showed that school based physical activity can improve students' attention, concentration, and ability to stay on task.[14] Classroom behavior can be improved through breaks for physical activity[15] and free play during recess stimulates children's imaginations as well as fostering critical thinking skills.[16]

Recess can also provide psychosocial benefits to students. During recess children gain skills in conflict resolution by playing with their peers, learning how to share, and collaborating around games.[17] Physical activity is also known to help mitigate depression and anxiety in children.[18] Therefore, time spent being physically active during recess promotes the development of social skills in addition to providing health benefits and enhancing cognitive functioning as well as academic performance.

Why is mandatory daily active recess needed in New York Schools?

In New York State, approximately 33% of children are overweight or obese and a national study found that 58% of children ages 6-11 do not meet the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity.[19] According to a 2008 report from the New York State Comptroller's Office, the vast majority of elementary schools are not in compliance with offering the required amount of physical education classes.[20] This finding is particularly unfortunate given that New York is one of only 6 states to require physical education in every grade, K-12.[21]

In a survey of nearly 2,000 principals across the United States, only half reported that students received between 16-30 minutes of recess per day. Even when cuts to recess are not made school-wide, recess may be withheld from students with unfinished school work or as punishment for bad behavior.[22] Another survey of over 1,900 principals across the U.S. found that 77% reported withholding recess.[23]

Regularly scheduled recess has been prioritized by numerous efforts including the United States Department of Health and Human Service's Healthy People 2020 and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation-funded organization, PlayWorks, a nonprofit organization that promotes the benefits of play in schools.19 A mandatory daily active recess policy helps preserve this time, ensuring that students enjoy the physical, academic, and psychosocial benefits of recess. Policies can vary greatly, including the scope, amount of time, and other supports that are required. Model policies are included in this toolkit.

Requiring daily active recess is also a way to begin to address disparities. Schools with more than a 50 percent minority enrollment or in the lowest income levels on average participate in the fewest minutes of recess.[24] In Rochester, NY city schools with mostly low income students of color were less likely to have a policy around daily recess than suburban schools and, subsequently, Rochester schools were less likely to have recess.[25] Research has demonstrated that children living in low-income neighborhoods

already have decreased rates of physical activity[26] which suggests that they could benefit greatly from daily active recess at school. Implementing a policy like mandatory daily active recess ensures that all students will have the opportunity to reap the benefits of daily physical activity.

Steps to Implementation:

Implementing a mandatory daily active recess policy is an ongoing effort that should engage many stakeholders throughout the process. Stakeholders can range from school officials and parent-teacher associations (PTA) to community organizations and even representatives of the local government. The goal is to develop a partnership that works collaboratively to develop a clear plan for implementing a mandatory daily active recess policy. Steps to implementation include:

CHECKLIST

1. Conduct a preliminary assessment of existing policies
2. Identify and educate stakeholders
3. Educate and Convene stakeholders
4. Identify how to include mandatory daily active recess in school polices
5. Draft the policy
6. Solicit feedback
7. Approve and implement the policy
8. Regularly evaluate and provide support

1. Conduct a preliminary assessment:

a. In order to gain an understanding of the current environment surrounding school-based activity and recess, make note of any relevant policies that already exist at the district and state levels. These policies include those that would support as well as create challenges for mandatory daily active recess.

b. Identify relevant data that may be available such as existing records that document when recess is held, amount of PE provided each week, or school-specific height and weight or body mass index data.[27]

2. Identify champions and stakeholders:

a. Identify advocates for physical activity in schools and invite them to be mandatory daily active recess champions. A champion can be a parent, a community member, a teacher, or a local community-based organization that has some level of influence with the community and school administrators. They will help you spread the word and make the case for mandatory daily active recess.

b. Elicit participation from physical activity advocates. These champions of physical activity can build a network of support around the need for a mandatory daily active recess policy throughout the implementation process.

c. Identify any decision makers whose approval is necessary for establishing a policy. These stakeholders will likely include the school administration as well as relevant administrative and building maintenance staff. Stakeholders should also include teachers, assistant teachers, and the staff who provide supervision during the lunch or recess periods.

d. Engage other important stakeholders such as members of a school wellness council, parent-teacher associations, parents (whether active in PTA or not), and engaged community-based organizations.

3. Educate and convene stakeholders:

a. Provide resources, like the DASH-NY info sheet (See Appendix A), about the importance of a mandatory daily active recess policy. Create your own handbook or utilize existing resources (See Appendix A).

b. Apply strategies to educate stakeholders and community members, such as organizing meetings with champions, parents, recess advocates, and other key stakeholders who are already familiar with the school or district.

c. Determine the best way to convene stakeholders. It is likely that a mix of strategies will be needed,[28] such as having one-on-one meetings, facilitating ad hoc meetings between various stakeholders, and forming a unified working group. The Partnership for Prevention provides guidance on how to bring stakeholders together as a working group and create an outreach campaign for school-based physical activity.[24]

4. Identify solutions to existing barriers:

a. Using the preliminary assessment and knowledge gained from working with stakeholders, begin to create an accurate picture of the landscape within which the policy is being created. Consultations with stakeholders should provide insight on different ways to introduce a mandatory daily active recess policy.

b. Address any gaps in information on a mandatory daily active recess policy in order to distinguish existing from perceived barriers. Then record existing and perceived barriers.

c. Categorize existing barriers into short and long-term barriers. A list of common barriers is discussed on page 8.

d. Identify what assets are already accessible. Some possibilities include: extra support staff such as teachers, parents, and community members who are willing to advocate for a mandatory daily active recess policy available physical space and equipment finding potential grants using funding that is already available within the school.

5. Identify how to include mandatory daily active recess in school or district policies:

a. Review other policies and practices that keep scheduled free time from being active such punishment policies or conservative bad weather policies that include concerns about student safety when playing in snow.

b. Identify school district-wide policies that address various aspects of education,[29] which could be amended to include mandatory daily active recess.

c. Identify how schools might add mandatory daily active recess to an existing policy or as a new stand alone rule.

   i. Local school wellness policies at the district level, required of all schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA),[30] could include a mandatory daily active recess policy.

   ii. Federal minimum guidelines for school wellness policies are forthcoming; however it is unclear whether recess will be included.

d. Determine the feasibility of adding mandatory daily active recess to an existing policy or as a new stand alone rule based on the desired scope of current school policies.

e. Identify elements of the adoption process such as who must draft the policy, how policies may be proposed and amended, and who approves the new policy.

6. Draft a sustainable mandatory daily active recess policy:

a. Use model policies that have already been drafted by numerous organizations to advocate for mandatory daily active recess.[31,32] Model policies can be found within implementation examples starting on page 11.

b. Incorporate a system for monitoring policy compliance and maintaining support. For example, the HHFKA requires schools to conduct public assessments of school wellness policies and inform the community as to who is not in compliance.

7. Solicit feedback based on how the policy is enacted:

a. Create a timeline of deadlines to help manage a reasonable plan during the process of soliciting and receiving feedback.

b. Contact stakeholders including champions, other advocates, and those who will be required to implement the policy. Give them a copy of the draft policy and ask for their feedback on the quality and clarity of the written policy, feasibility for implementation, and the timeline for putting the policy into practice. This approach can help strengthen the policy.[33]

8. Approve and implement the policy:

a. Identify a timeline for implementation in collaboration with key decision makers which will help the policy gain approval typically by the school or district.

b. Determine which stakeholders are needed in order to meet the implementation timeline and continue to identify new partners who can help at each stage of implementation.

c. Inform the community about major milestones such as the approval of the policy. Hosting a kickoff event is one way to introduce the new mandatory daily active recess policy.[34,35]

9. Regularly evaluate to ensure compliance and provide support to overcome barriers:

a. Set a schedule indicating how often mandatory daily active recess will be evaluated to ensure compliance. This policy should be evaluated while it is being implemented and then at least annually after implementation.

b. Determine barriers to implementing the policy through consultations with stakeholders.

c. Provide supports to mitigate these barriers. Supports may include:

    i. Linking teachers and school administration to community organizations that promote daily active recess.

    ii. Encouraging or facilitating trainings of recess supervisors.

    iii. Advocating for increased funds or equipment donations to further support daily active recess.

Common Barriers

Identifying barriers is an ongoing part of the process when implementing a mandatory daily active recess policy. Previous work indicates that common barriers include:

1. **Perceived loss of instructional time-** Recess is often seen as at odds with instructional time and, as a result, pressures to meet academic mandates have led many schools to eliminate time for recess. This pressure is increased by programs that tie school funding to academic achievement such as Race to the Top and No Child Left Behind. Additionally, recess is often used as a time to provide extra assistance to students who need special education services or counseling. Time that is designated for recess may also be used to give remedial instruction to struggling students or to have them make-up missing assignments.

   77% OF PRINCIPALS SURVEYED IN THE U.S. REPORTED WITHHOLDING RECESS AS A PUNISHMENT[22]

   Principals and teachers can be educated about how recess may promote better academic performance. For example, if physical activity breaks improve classroom behavior then recess may lead to improved standardized test scores or higher grades. The social benefits of recess are also important to highlight because they may have a positive impact on classroom behavior and academic performance. Therefore, principals and teachers should also be informed about how recess may promote social skills development.

2. **Lack of Supervision-** Finding the necessary staff to provide and supervise mandatory daily active recess is a widespread challenge for schools.[36] Adequate supervision that prevents playground injuries and mediates conflict is critical to having a successful recess period.[37] Mandatory daily active recess may be particularly staff intensive if organized activities are included. Further, it has been found that students in some communities need adult guidance on how to play in an organized and safe way (i.e., how to use tools like rock, paper, scissors to resolve conflicts, how to keep games going during recess).[38,39]

   There are several reasons why it is difficult to find sufficient staff. Supervision of recess in most schools is not part of teacher or teacher aid job requirements and teachers are not typically on duty during lunch.[40] Districts may have restrictions on what types of staff are permitted to supervise lunch or recess.[41] However creative solutions have been utilized including hiring a "recess coach" who facilitates activities,[42] using parent and community volunteers,[43] or using teachers' principal-directed preparation periods to create a rotating schedule of recess supervisors.[44] About 45% of Chicago Public Schools use educational support personnel that are permitted to supervise recess.[45]

   It is important to plan for staff training once supervisory staff members are identified. Training can provide skills on how to promote activity in spontaneous and organized play, prevent injuries, and teach children conflict resolution.[46] However, training school staff may incur additional costs, be time intensive, and reduce the number of available staff members who can supervise recess on a given day.[47]

3. **Cost-** The potential cost of implementing mandatory daily active recess might seem overwhelming at first. The cost is also difficult to predict and might vary widely among schools because different resources are available to each school. In many cases, a mandatory daily active recess policy can be a cost neutral change for the school. Even significant barriers can be overcome without being cost prohibitive. For example, issues with finding sufficient space can be a barrier to implementation of a mandatory daily active recess policy. Engaging in a joint use agreement with a nearby public or private facility can provide additional space, often at no cost.[1]

However, if a school does need to hire supervision or compensate teachers for recess supervision, a mandatory daily active recess policy may carry some kind of cost. Additionally if a school elects to train its recess supervisors, it may be time or funding intensive. Fortunately, there are grants that could help cover at least part of these costs. For example, several grant opportunities are offered through KaBOOM!, a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating play spaces through community participation. This source of funding supports the construction of a playground or the completion of play spaces.[48]

Table 1: Summary of Common Barriers

BARRIERS	ISSUES	OPPORTUNITIES
Time	Pressures to meet academic mandates result in increased instructional time and leave less time for recess Remedial instruction or make-up assignments are often given to students during recess	Educate principals and teachers about how recess promotes academic performance Educate principals and teachers about the social benefits of recess
Supervision	Lack of adequate supervisors Supervisors may not have training or skills in playground conflict resolution	Examine school resources, including funds, potential parent or community volunteers, or organizations that can provide additional supervisors Provide school officials with resources for training on conflict resolution
Cost	Difficult to predict costs associated with implementation of daily active recess Some recommended recess	Utilize no-cost solutions, such as joint use agreements, when possible Identify free training that may be available for school staff Search for funding grants to reduce

Implementation Examples

Who has implemented mandatory daily active recess policy?

Mandatory daily active recess has already been implemented in a number of schools, districts, and even some states. The following case studies exemplify different strategies for engaging stakeholders, overcoming barriers, and implementing a mandatory daily active recess policy (Table 2).

1. **Rochester Public School District-** The Rochester Public School District amended their school district's wellness policy to include a policy of mandatory daily active recess. The policy requires that all elementary schools have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess and explicitly recommends that staff promote 'moderate to vigorous' physical exercise during that time. The policy went into effect for the 2012-2013 school year.

47 % OF ROCHESTER SCHOOLS DID NOT HAVE A DESIGNATED TIME FOR DAILY RECESS[49]

Notably, the policy includes a hardship waiver which allows principals to be exempt if they can document that they are currently unable to provide daily recess. To do so the principal must provide a written letter to the Rochester Chief of Schools and demonstrate that the school meets the minimum state requirements for physical education (currently 120 minutes per week). A hardship waiver is beneficial because it can allow for exceptional cases; however, it can also weaken the overall implementation of the policy.

The implementation of a mandatory daily active recess policy in the Rochester School District demonstrates that the champion can be an external partner to the school district. In this case, Healthi Kids, a project of the Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency, played a central role throughout the process. Healthi Kids conducted a survey of 40 elementary schools in the City of Rochester area, which led to the creation of Recess Report 2010 that articulated the need for recess with facts specific to the area schools.[49] Healthi Kids continued to educate and convene stakeholders and utilized a newsletter to notify the community of relevant public meetings. For example, before the Rochester Board of Education had an open meeting to discuss updates to the wellness policy, Healthi Kids notified the local community and other recess advocates that recess would be discussed and detailed the policy that would be advocated for by Healthi Kids at the meeting.

Piloting the policy in two schools before implementing it district-wide for 34,000 children allowed the district to address barriers to implementation on a smaller scale. It was found that even before implementation, schools had greater difficulty ensuring that recess was active when it was held indoors because of bad weather than when it was held outdoors. Thus, it was advised that, in addition to district policies, elementary schools should create a building-level policy that details how mandatory daily active recess will be achieved in a variety of contingency situations. Many creative solutions were already in place and could be used by Rochester schools, ranging from a 10-minute indoor physical activity at the beginning of the day to having classroom teachers incorporate movement into lessons.[50] After implementation, it was found that the school staff needed guidance on how to supervise recess, with a particular focus on conflict resolution. This barrier was addressed through trainings for school staff and by providing curriculum resources. Playworks, a national organization that promotes recess supervision, can also lend support by providing coaches who resolve conflicts that arise on the playground and encourage cooperative free play. Other programs such as Americorps VISTAs, Responsive Classroom, and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports are useful resources for schools needing to address behavioral challenges and conflict resolution during recess.

2. **Chicago Public School District-** In 2012, the Chicago Public School District, whose superintendent came from the Rochester City School District, instituted a requirement that grades K-8 be provided with at least 20 minutes of daily recess. The policy mandated that the recess encourages physical activity or that activities promote social skills development. Further, the policy recommends that recess be scheduled prior to the students' lunch period.[51] The policy specifically prohibits withholding opportunities for physical activity as a punishment.

   In 2009, the Chicago Public Schools convened a Recess Task Force to identify barriers and opportunities for implementing recess in elementary schools. The task force was comprised of several district officials, representatives of the Healthy Schools Campaign (a not-for-profit organization of parents, teachers, school administrators and policy makers), elected

officials, parent organizations, and others. Its formation came after a widespread petition by Parents United for Healthy Schools, a coalition of parents, teachers, and community members formed to address childhood obesity disparities in Chicago Public Schools.[52] The task force culminated in the creation of a guide called Developing a School Recess Plan, which provides a step-by-step toolkit that school communities can use to create recess options for their students. The guide, published in May 2011 was written with input from parents, teachers and principals in addition to members of the task force.[53]

Months later, the State of Illinois voted to create the Illinois Task Force on Recess in Schools, which met from October 2011 to January 2012. The task force included state senators, house representatives, as well as representation from labor organizations, education organizations, advocates of healthy schools, and the Chicago Board of Education. The state task force published a guide in January 2012 that recommended that each student from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade have daily recess, and provided guidance on how schools could overcome barriers to daily recess.[54]

Later in 2012, the Chicago Public School District passed its recess requirement. Instituting a mandatory daily active recess policy at such a large scale was an example of how joint efforts between school administrators, city and state officials, and numerous community partners to address health can be successful. The regulations implemented for the Chicago Public School District included grade specific time minimums for core subjects in addition to the requirement of 20 minutes of daily recess for K-8.[55] The local wellness policy for the public school system was also updated to include the language requiring daily active recess.[56]

In October 2012, the Chicago Public School district launched Healthy Chicago Public Schools, a broad initiative to align schools with Healthy Chicago the city's public health agenda.[57] The ongoing support of recess will be a component of the Healthy Chicago Public Schools efforts in part through the $4.4 million funding awarded from the federal Community Transformation Grant for the expansion of Healthy Chicago Public Schools.

When mandatory daily active recess was approved as part of district policies in March 2012, the public schools partnered with VIVA Teachers to create a toolkit entitled the Recess Readiness Guide.

To further aid with implementation, some of the public schools also utilize PlayWorks, a national organization which provides trained recess coaches that supervise recess and organize activities. PlayWorks utilizes a system of 'junior coaches,' which trains student leaders on how to help lead recess and prevent bullying. This approach helps to engage students and teach conflict mediation. Play Works will be working with 16 Chicago schools in the coming year. This approach recognizes that the implementation of a district-wide policy may involve different schools needing different supports to implement recess.

3. **State Laws: Missouri, Virginia, and Nevada-** Eight states now have a policy that requires or recommends daily active recess for elementary school students.[58,59] Missouri,

Virginia, and Nevada have statewide requirements for mandatory recess that might be used as model policies.

In 2006, Virginia introduced daily recess through a State Board Rule. The rule requires that all elementary schools (K-5) provide students with daily recess, 'as determined appropriate by the school.'[60] The rule also addresses extracurricular activities and competitive sports. The language reads: Each elementary school shall provide students with a daily recess during the regular school year as determined appropriate by the school.

In 2009, Missouri passed SB291, which requires elementary schools to provide a minimum of one 20-minute recess period per day. Similar to the Chicago Public School District, a mandatory daily active recess policy was included as part of a much broader set of changes. SB291 was an omnibus bill that reformed many aspects of public education in Missouri. It states that, "A minimum of one recess period of twenty minutes per day shall be provided for children in elementary schools, which may be incorporated into the lunch period."[61] Recess is defined in the bill as: a structured play environment outside of regular classroom instructional activities, where students are allowed to engage in supervised safe active free play.

While Nevada does not explicitly require daily recess, it does require schools to designate at least 30 minutes of time for daily physical activity. It additionally requires all elementary schools to serve lunch 'after the mid-day recess period.'58 These changes were instituted through a Statewide School Wellness Policy, which requires schools to set or exceed certain minimums in their own school wellness policies. The Statewide School Wellness Policy directs all schools to have a plan for evaluating the implementation of the school's wellness policy, including daily physical activity. The policy allows for a hardship exemption; however, a school may only remain exempt for up to two years.[62]

Table 2: Overview of Implementation Examples

IMPLEMENTATION EXAMPLES	TYPE OF POLICY	POLICY DETAILS
Rochester school district	District-wide policy	20 minutes of daily recess K-5 Recommends that staff encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity Includes a hardship waiver
Chicago school district	District-wide policy	20 minutes of daily recess K-8 Requires that activities be active or improve social skills Prohibits withholding recess as punishment Recommends that recess occur before lunch
Virginia	State Law	Daily recess provided as determined appropriate by the school K-5 Implemented via state board rule
Missouri	State Law	20 minutes of daily recess K-5 Implemented via omnibus state education bill
Nevada	State Law	30 minutes of daily physical activity K-5 Requires lunch to be after the 'mid-day recess' Implemented via a statewide school wellness policy

Summary

Daily physical activity helps reduce the risk of obesity as well as promotes academic performance and mental ability among children in grades K-5. Recess, in particular, also provides psychosocial benefits for children in elementary school. During recess children gain skills in conflict resolution by playing with their peers, learning how to share, and collaborating around games.[63] Unfortunately, many children in New York State are not taking part in the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity. Mandatory daily active recess is a relatively easy, low cost solution to meeting physical activity guidelines for children and can account for as much as one third of their recommended daily physical activity.

Although it is too soon in the evaluation process to determine if mandatory daily active recess improves health outcomes, evidence to date suggests that the physical activity students engage in during recess may be related to improved reading and math scores.[64,65,66] Further research will be needed to evaluate to what extent a daily active recess policy contributes to improved health, as well as academic performance.

This policy implementation guide can help mandatory daily active recess be a success in elementary schools by ensuring that it is included as part of the daily curriculum. By establishing a time for students to engage in physically active free play or structured games, mandatory daily active recess can provide the many benefits associated with being physically active. Moreover, mandatory daily active recess can be administered through school district or school wellness policies.

Implementing a mandatory daily active recess policy is an ongoing effort that engages many stakeholders throughout the process. These advocates range from school officials and parent-teacher associations to community organizations and even representatives of the local government who form partnerships in support of this policy. Ultimately, the implementation of mandatory daily active recess is a collaborative process that will continue to engage many stakeholders from both within and outside of New York State schools.

We want to hear from you! As you work towards bringing active recess back into the school day, feel free to share your challenges and your success stories with us at dashny@nyam.org.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the Healthi Kids Coalition in Rochester, NY for sharing their research, resources, and experiences in implementing a district-wide mandatory daily active recess policy. They are truly champions for the health of our youth.

About DASH-NY

DASH-NY is New York State's Obesity Prevention Policy Center. With funding from the New York State Department of Health, The New York Academy of Medicine established the DASH-NY Coalition and Policy Center to end the epidemic of obesity in New York. DASH-NY is housed at The New York Academy of Medicine in New York City and serves all of New York State.

The DASH-NY Policy Center conducts policy analysis and research and offers technical assistance and training. The DASH-NY Coalition supports peer-learning and facilitates policy changes to address the physical activity and nutrition needs of New York's communities. Together, the Center and Coalition enable policy change at the neighborhood, town, city, county, and state-wide level. Visit www.dashny.org more information.

Appendix A

Educational Resources

Action for Healthy Kids
Game On!
The Learning Connection: What You Need to Know to Ensure Your Kids Are Healthy and Ready to Learn
Wellness Policy Tool

Active Design Guidelines for Playgrounds
Promoting Physical Activity and Health in Design

American Academy of Pediatrics
The Crucial Role of Recess in Schools

Asphalt Green
Recess Enhancement Program

Center for Disease Control and Prevention
The Association Between School-Based Physical Activity, Including Physical Education, and Academic Performance

Chicago Public Schools
Chicago Recess Readiness Guide

DASH-NY
Mandatory Daily Active Recess Info Sheet

Growing Up FIT!
Active Recess for All: A cost-effective program to increase physical activity and reduce overweight among school children (recorded presentation)

HealthiKids
Recess Report 2010: Are Schools Receiving a Passing Grade?

KaBOOM!
Take Action for Play

KaBOOM! and Playworks
The Power of Play Webinar

Minneapolis Public Schools
Play to Learn: Active Recess Through Systematic Supervision

National Association of State Boards of Education
State School Healthy Policy Database

New York State Department of Health
Student Weight Status Data

Playworks
Make Recess Count

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
Effective Schoolwide Interventions

Responsive Classroom
Recess Resources

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Recess Rules: Why the undervalued playtime may be America's best investment for healthy kids and health schools

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Assessing Recess: Growing concerns about shrinking playtime in schools

Shape of the Nation Report
Status of Physical Education in the US

Appendix B

Implementation Steps Worksheet

Conduct a preliminary assessment of existing policies supporting or preventing daily active recess in the school

School: _____

District: _____

State: _____

Identify and educate stakeholders

Identify stakeholders

- School administration and administrative staff
- Teachers, assistant teachers, and school support staff
- School wellness council
- Parent-Teacher Associations
- Community organizations or residents

Educate stakeholders

- Newsletter
- Meetings
- Letter to editor of local newspaper

Convene stakeholders

Identify solutions to existing barriers and assets

Barriers: _____

Assets: _____

Identify how to include mandatory daily active recess in school polices

Draft the policy

Solicit feedback

Approve and implement the policy

Regularly evaluate and provide support

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