

Recess Guidelines



powered by



Recess Rocks in Rhode Island (RRIRI), a partnership between [Playworks](#), [Rhode Island Healthy Schools Coalition \(RIHSC\)](#), and Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island, has **energized education and increased safe, healthy play for 100 schools and 40,000 students across Rhode Island since 2015**. After months of sheltering in place due to COVID19, attention to recess during school reopening is essential. Recess provides opportunities for children’s physical, social and emotional development, which are essential for well-being and learning. When schools reopen, children will need space to heal from their collective trauma. Seeing their friends, playing, and being outside adds normalcy to the school day and are important ways to heal. As you prepare to implement both in-school and virtual recess experiences, below are some options for what recess could look like at your school and district.

At School, Stable Groups (WITHOUT masks and distancing)

Students attend school in person and have recess with a stable group (“pod”) of classmates where they do not wear masks or physical distance.

At School, Stable Groups (WITH masks and distancing)

Students attend school in person and have recess with a stable group (“pod”) of classmates where they wear masks and physical distance (6’ optimal).

At Home, Virtually Live

Students participate in distance learning from home. Live recess is built into the daily/weekly schedule led by an educator.

At Home, Independent

Students participate in distance learning from home. Recess activities/games are included in the daily/weekly schedule but are done independently using provided resources.

At School, Stable Groups WITHOUT masks and distancing

Students attend school in person and have recess with a stable group (“pod”) of classmates where they do not wear masks or physical distance.

SANITIZING

- Washing all hands before and after recess
- Sanitize equipment after recess

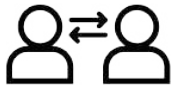


SCHEDULING

- 20-30 mins per class/pod of outside play time (not including transition time)
- Ideally only having one pod out at a time
 - If not possible, creating zones for pods to stay separated
 - If needed, pods rotate going outside or staying inside each day (other pod stays in a classroom)
- Transitions:
 - Either have 5 minutes between recesses
 - Or have a “traffic pattern” so pods don’t use same entry / hallway

SPACE

- Create zones for each class/pod at recess
- Basketball court sized area for each class/pod
- 2-3 games available in the zone daily



EQUIPMENT

- Recommendations for utilizing the play structure(s)
 - Avoid using play structures for start of year
 - Potentially rotating use of play structures later in year based on CDC recommendations
 - Equipment stays within each pod in any given recess until it is cleaned
- Equipment for each class
 - Jump Ropes (1 per 5 students)
 - Hula hoops (1 per 2-3 students)
 - Multiple colors of cones (1 cone per student)
 - Gator ball
 - Soccer ball
 - Basketball
 - Playground ball
 - Chalk



GAMES

- Core Games: Offer choice of 1-2 of these rotational games every day to provide consistency and engage a variety of students across gender and skill level.
 - [Penalty Kick Soccer](#)
 - [Four Square](#)
 - [Superstar Knockout](#)
 - Hula Hoops
 - Jump Ropes
- Game of the Week: Supplement your core games with a group game that can be played safely. Our Safe Return to Play Guide can help you find a game that will work safely in your space or consider how to modify one of your favorite games.



ADULT PARTICIPATION

- Bring equipment
- Set up activities
- Model positive behavior (verbal appreciations)
- Play games with your students
- Lead transitions
- Clean/Sanitize equipment before and after recess



At School, Stable Groups WITH masks and distancing

Students attend school in person and have recess with a stable group (“pod”) of classmates where they wear masks and physical distance (6’ optimal).

● SANITIZING

- Washing all hands before and after recess
- Sanitize equipment after recess

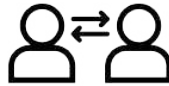


● SCHEDULING

- 20-30 mins per class/pod of outside play time (not including transition time)
- Only one pod allowed outside at a time
- Using classroom for recess when schedule doesn't allow all pods to go outside separately
- Transitions:
 - Either have 5 minutes between recesses
 - Or have a “traffic pattern” so pods don't use same entry / hallway

● SPACE

- Outdoor
 - Basketball court sized area for each class/pod
 - 2-3 games available in the zone daily
- Indoor
 - If possible, identify indoor spaces within the building that are large enough for students to physically distance while playing (ie: cafeteria, stage, library) and can be cleaned between uses
 - If space allows, create a circle area where students can be physical distanced within the classroom (away from their desks)
 - If no other option, use games that can be played while students sit or stand at their own desk within the classroom



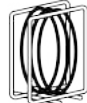
● EQUIPMENT

- Recommendations for utilizing the play structure(s)
 - Avoid using play structures for start of year
 - Potentially rotating use of play structures later in year based on CDC recommendations
- Equipment for each class
 - Jump Ropes (1 per 5 students)
 - Hula hoops (1 per 2-3 students)
 - Multiple colors of cones (1 cone per student)
 - Soccer ball
 - Chalk



● GAMES

- Core Games: Offer choice of 1-2 of these rotational games every day to provide consistency and engage a variety of students across gender and skill level.
 - Hula hoops
 - Jump ropes
 - Hopscotch
 - Land, Sea, Air
 - Up, Down, Stop, Go
- Game of the Week: Supplement your core games with a group game that can be played safely. Our Safe Return to Play Guide can help you find a game that will work safely in your space or consider how to modify one of your favorite games.



● ADULT PARTICIPATION

- Bring equipment
- Set up activities
- Model positive behavior (verbal appreciations)
- Play games with your students
- Lead Transitions
- Clean/Sanitize equipment before and after recess



At Home, Virtually Live

Students participate in distance learning from home. Live recess is built into the daily/weekly schedule led by an educator.

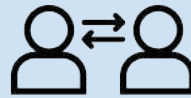
SCHEDULE

- Class fits 20 minutes into their daily schedule for a recess break lead by their teacher or specific staff member at the school
- Recess is scheduled for the same time every day to establish consistency
- Classes can have recess individually or in conjunction with other classes



SPACE

- Students and teachers use the space within their home
- Assume that students have limited space when playing the game
- Equipment
 - Games should have limited or no equipment
 - Safely use everyday household objects when possible, provide an explanation such as “find something safely tossable”
- Games
 - [Up, Down, Stop, Go](#)
 - [Simon Says](#)
 - [Land, Sea, Air](#)
 - [I See, I See](#)
 - [Group Count](#)
 - Game of the Week: Find another game that can be played virtually in our Safe Return to Play Guide. It also includes questions to consider when modifying one of your favorite games.



ADULT PARTICIPATION

- Teachers/staff plan and lead games/movement breaks during the 20 minute time period



At Home, Independent

Students participate in distance learning from home. Recess activities/games are included in the daily/weekly schedule but are done independently using provided resources.

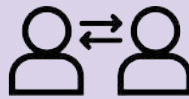
SCHEDULE

- Designate time each day for students to play on their own with the provided resources



SPACE

- Students and teachers use the space within their home
- Assume that students have limited space when playing the game



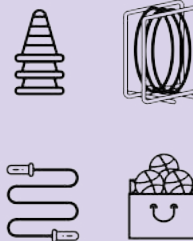
EQUIPMENT

- Games should have limited or no equipment
- Safely use everyday household objects



GAMES

- [Up, Down, Stop, Go](#)
- [Simon Says](#)
- [Land, Sea, Air](#)
- [I See, I See](#)
- [Group Count](#)
- Game of the Week: Find another game that can be played virtually in our Safe Return to Play Guide. It also includes questions to consider when modifying one of your favorite games.



ADULT PARTICIPATION

- Teachers/staff designate time for play each day
- Teachers/staff share out resources with students and families each week
- Teachers/staff create a challenge for students to learn and play a new game each week

