ACTIVE INDOOR RECESS

SURVIVAL GUIDE

Recess Rocks in RI

is a partnership between Blue Cross & Blue Shield of RI, Playworks New England, and Rhode Island Healthy Schools Coalition, celebrating ***10 years of rocking recess at Rhode Island schools!***

It's a free training program for school and recess staff, designed to ensure that recess is a safe, meaningful, and healthy experience for every child.

Each year as the cold weather approaches, RRIRI hosts an Active Indoor Recess (AIR) Week, with a virtual training for school staff kicking off a week of ideas, tips and games from Playworks to keep kids moving when recess moves indoors! This is a collection of the 2025 Recess Rocks in RI resources shared during AIR Week.

Recess Rocks in RI
IMPACT SNAPSHOT
as of Feb 2025

128
RI schools have been trained

45,278
RI students are benefitting from an improved recess

and still going strong!

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Rhode Island
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PLAYWORKS

RIHSC
Rhode Island Healthy Schools Coalition

TIPS for Active Indoor Recess

courtesy of Playworks

1 Map Your Indoor Recess Space

Map your space to plan the layout of your recess. Is there a rug used for Circle Time or Morning Meeting? A corner that can house quiet activities? Can you move the desks or tables, or play games around them? Consider unexpected spaces like hallways, school library, gym, or auditorium for recess if available. You'll be surprised at what you can fit in your space when you map it out ahead of time.

2 Collaborate Across Classrooms

Collaborate with other classrooms to host a few different game stations. One classroom can host a variety of quiet or self-access activities, while another one is the destination for a group game. You may even be able to use a hallway for a quiet walking club. This setup can be an effective way to make the most of limited recess staff, and also gives students a chance to socialize with friends in other classes.

3 Get Input from Students

Give students the opportunity to come up with their own activity ideas, or let them vote on 2-3 organized game options. This generates excitement and helps ensure recess will be a success. Students who aren't interested in that option can do another activity, like puzzles, board games, drawing, or a fitness/yoga corner.

4 Keep It Simple (and Student-Led)

Choosing simple, self-sustaining games that students can run themselves makes it easier to run multiple stations. Many games below can all be student-led and are self-sustaining. If you have Junior Coaches at your school, enlist them to lead games for younger grades.

5 Modify Movement for Small Spaces

Introducing movement modifications can make any active game safe to play indoors. Try playing “I See, I See” or “Switch” and swapping out running for a penguin waddle, moon walk, heel-toe, or “fire feet”, a quick shuffle where both feet stay on the floor.

TIPS for Active Indoor Recess

courtesy of Playworks

6 Use Attention Getters and Signals

Use fun attention getters to help kids focus and redirect their energy during indoor recess. A countdown timer or a two-minute warning helps students know to wrap up games and begin cleaning up. Find new ways to get students' attention with the built-in attention getters in games below like I See I See and Shipwreck.

7 Create an Indoor Recess Plan

Find out your district or school policies for when indoor recess takes place, who makes the decision, and how it is communicated with staff. Work with other members of the recess team to choose a couple of go-to games and activities so that you're ready when play moves indoors.

8 Pre-Teach Indoor Recess Games

Coordinate with your school's physical education teacher to pre-teach games and other activities that are safe for a classroom setting. You can also consider pre-teaching games throughout the year whenever your class needs a brain break, or even introducing them as an option at outdoor recess.

9 Set Expectations for Recess Volume

Most students enjoy getting a little noisy at recess, which can make transitioning to indoor recess tough. Help smooth this transition by setting expectations for volume levels at the start of recess and pausing for reminders when necessary.

10 Use a Calming Transition to Return to Learning

Recess can get a little hectic. Cool down breaths are a great way to end recess by bringing energy levels down and helping students to refocus. Check out some of our favorites here!

GAMES for Active Indoor Recess

courtesy of Playworks

Click on the game for how to play!	GRADE									Quiet	No Equipment	Play Anywhere	Kid-Led
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8				
I See, I See	●	●	●								●	●	●
The Big Cheese	●	●	●	●							●	●	●
Dance Freeze	●	●	●	●	●	●					●	●	●
Concentration Ball	●	●	●	●	●	●						●	●
Running Through the Forest	●	●	●	●	●	●					●	●	
Up Down Stop Go	●	●	●	●	●	●					●	●	●
Switch	●	●	●	●	●	●						●	●
Shipwreck	●	●	●	●	●	●					●	●	●
Head Shoulders Knees Cones	●	●	●	●	●	●						●	●
Gotcha	●	●	●	●	●	●					●	●	●
Rhythm Detective	●	●	●	●	●	●					●	●	●

	GRADE												
Click on the game for how to play!	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Quiet	No Equipment	Play Anywhere	Kid-Led
What Are You Doing?	●	●	●	●	●	●				●	●	●	●
I Love My Neighbor	●	●	●	●	●	●					●		●
Huckle Buckle Beanstalk	●	●	●	●	●	●				●		●	●
RPS Stretch	●	●	●	●	●	●					●	●	●
RPS Relay	●	●	●	●	●	●					●	●	●
Four Corners	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Evolution			●	●	●	●					●	●	●
Silent Ball			●	●	●	●				●		●	●
Museum Night Janitor			●	●	●	●				●	●	●	●
Tic Tac Toe Relay			●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●
Magic Mind Trick			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●
Giant				●	●	●						●	
Fox and Rabbit				●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
Splat				●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●

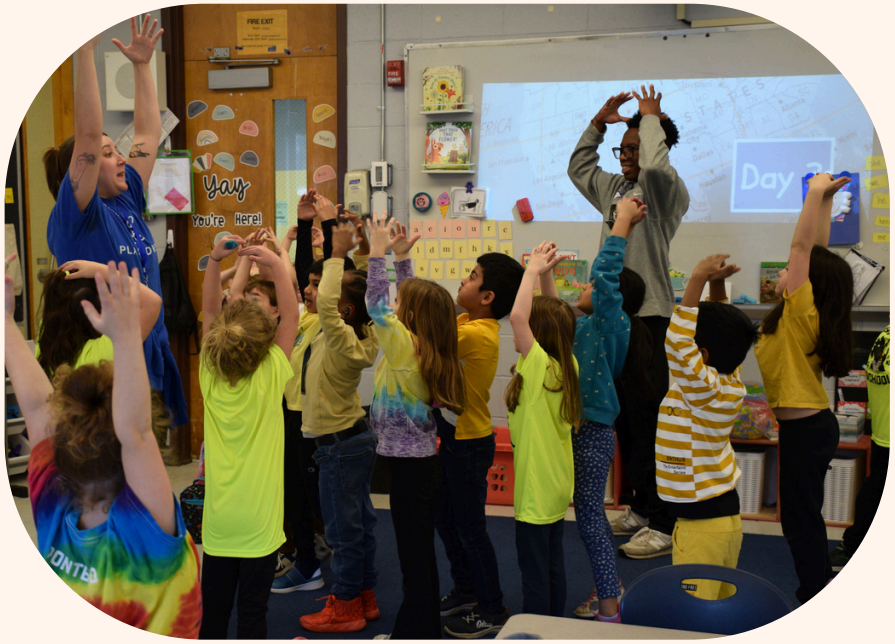
Recess Rocks in RI

10 2015-2025

PLAYWORKS

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Rhode Island

RIHSC Rhode Island Healthy Schools Coalition



For more information or to apply for RRIRI training:

Visit the RIHSC website

Contact Playworks

OR