

TRY STRUCTURED RECESS!

Structured recess is especially helpful for including children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in group play during recess. Try teaching a child with I/DD the games ahead of time so they are familiar with the rules. You may also match a child with I/DD with a peer helper to play games with during recess.

Active play during recess helps children get 1 hour of physical activity each day. However, many children are not as active as they could be during recess. To help all children benefit from recess, try organizing structured recess!

What is structured recess?

Structured recess is based on the principle of structured play which involves physical activities and games taught and led by adults.

Benefits of structured recess:

- Students can engage in physical activity regardless of skill level.
- Students practice motor skills taught in physical education class.
- Students receive targeted instruction and encouragement.
- Students can practice social skills with coaching from adults.
- Supervision ensures safety and healthy conflict resolution.
- Adults explain game rules to students who need more time to learn.

Ideas for structured recess:

- Encourage teachers, staff, or volunteers to act as “recess coaches,” lead activities, and provide supervision during recess.
- Create boundaries that divide the playground, field, or gym into areas for structured activities and free play.
- Play games such as four square, basketball, soccer, and Simon Says during structured recess.

