



Refreshing Recess

Week #5 Lesson Plan: Let's respect differences and include everybody

Theme: Let's respect differences and include everybody. Children engage in Magic Tag. Supervisors learn how to promote inclusion.

All students have a right to participate in and enjoy recess, including students with disabilities and/or mental health challenges. Because all students go to recess, this provides an opportunity to encourage children to respect differences and include others. Many children and youth who are perceived as 'different' because of disability, abilities, skin color, religion, sexual orientation, social skills, attractiveness, etc. ... are at risk of being excluded and bullied. All adults need to be on the 'look out' for students 'at-risk' of being excluded during recess and encourage others to include them and be a friends. Children and youth who have at least one good friend are less likely to be bullied and will experience greater degrees of emotional well-being.



Teach children the benefits of diversity! The world is a more colorful and interesting one because of diversity – differences in abilities, ethnicity, color, and religious beliefs. Encourage children/youth to be interested in learning about these differences and different ways of 'being'. Check out the ['What we can learn from a box of crayons'](#) activity. If we only can draw with one color crayon, we are very limited!

Week 5 promotes the inclusion of all students during recess. Adults will role model appropriate social skills and encourage including all students in games.

Goals:

1. Students engage in an activity that emphasizes empathy and helping each other out.
2. Supervisors learn about the possible challenges and solutions to recess participation for students with disabilities.

Supporting materials (downloadable) Every Moment Counts materials:

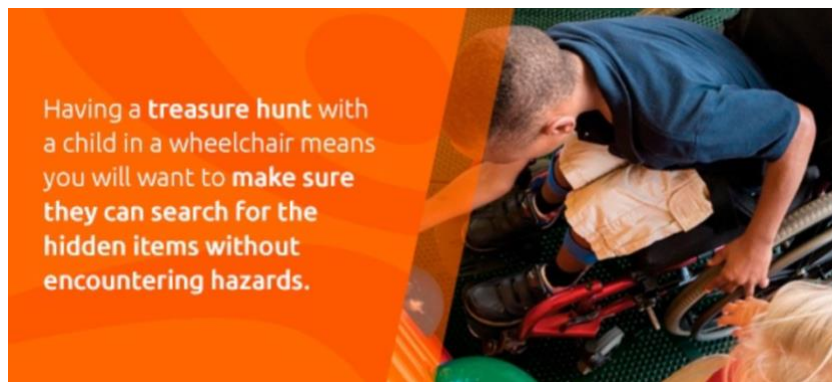
- [Refreshing Recess Newsletter Week #5: Inclusion of Students with Disabilities](#)

Materials from other sources/authors:

- Baylor University Online Masters in Social Work. [How to teach children about disabilities and inclusion](#). 'We accept you' is an important phrase every adult and child should use in everyday life. Children/youth with disabilities and/or mental health challenges are more likely to be bullied. It's important to strategically teach children how to respect and include others which helps: protect vulnerable children from being bullied, builds empathy and emotional intelligence, and helps students view differences in a positive manner. This resource shares information about how teach children about disabilities for different age groups.



- [Best Buddies Friendship Program](#). Everyone benefits from inclusion! *“When people with disabilities are integrated into the social fabric of the community and accepted as an individual beyond disability, there is an improvement in happiness, self-esteem, decision making capacity, and perceptions of value. But the benefits of inclusion are not limited to the person with disabilities ... the entire community benefits ... inclusion “decreases negative attitudes, stereotypes, stigma and discrimination” .*
- [Anti-Bullying Lesson Plan: Respecting Differences](#). (2014). School Specialty, Inc.
- Wang, K. (2013). [Recess for your child with special needs: 7 challenges and solutions. Friendship Circle](#). (www.friendshipcircle.org)
- Playworld. (2020). [Top 10 Playground Activities for Kids with Wheelchairs](#). Inclusive play encourages tolerance!



Having a **treasure hunt** with a child in a wheelchair means you will want to **make sure** they can search for the hidden items without encountering hazards.

Image from [Playworld](#). (2020)

Action steps for occupational therapist (OT) and other program facilitator.

➔ BEFORE the 5th session:

- 1) **OT and/or program facilitator:** Read supporting materials related to inclusion of students with disabilities. Reinforce these strategies in conversations with supervisors. **Gather the materials for Week #5’s activity – Magic Tag!**
- 2) **Recess supervisors (teachers, principals)** ➔ Give them the *Refreshing Recess Newsletter Week #5: Inclusion of Students with Disabilities*.

➔ DURING Day of the Session.

The program facilitator helps set up and lead the activity.

- 1) Announce the theme of the week to the students. Explain the importance of **including everyone** in play. No one likes being alone on the playground. Everyone should feel included. Sometimes this means adapting how a person does the activity in order to participate.



- 2) **Introduce the activity for the week** → Magic Tag
(See page 4)
 - Other possible activities for teaching tolerance – Refer to the ‘Learning for Justice’ website. A good indoor activity is [‘What we can learn from a box of crayons’](#). All you need are a box or bin of crayons and plain paper. Children draw a picture using just 1 crayon. Then, they draw the same picture using whatever colors they want. Talk about which picture they like better and why.



- 3) Model activities and interaction, problem-solve obstacles that may come up, and offer support to recess supervisors during recess time
- 4) **Touch base with the recess supervisors at the end of the session.** How do you think it went? What did you observe? Do you have any suggestions? Introduce the theme for week 6 – Let’s make sure everyone has fun!

Tier 2 & 3 Strategies. Occupational Therapy practitioner or program facilitator

- Tune into students with disabilities who may be struggling to participate and enjoy recess activities and/or interaction with peers.
- For students with or without disabilities and/or mental health issues who struggle to enjoy activities or interactions during recess, provide adaptations or accommodations (e.g. peer buddy, smaller group, individual consultation regarding how to interact in a group, etc.)

Congratulations on completing Week #5 of the Refreshing Recess Program! Move on to Week #6!



Week 5 Activity

Magic Tag!

Setting: Outdoor recess

Equipment Needed: None

This game fosters empathy for those who become ‘magic wands’ by encouraging others to unfreeze them! Also refer to instructions on the [Playworks](#) website.

Rules/Directions:

- Demonstrate safe tagging: light touch, like a butterfly wings, on the shoulder. (Unsafe tags: hard contact that might cause the person being tagged to fall.)
- Demonstrate that when you get tagged, you turn into a magic wand, which means you freeze with your hands down at your sides.
- Demonstrate how to turn the magic wand back into a person, which requires two people who are not the magician to join hands in a circle around the “wand” and say “abracadabra” to break the spell.
- Review the boundaries and the consequence for going outside them, which is that you automatically become a magic wand.
- Designate 3 magicians and signal to start the game.
- The object of the game is to avoid being tagged by the magicians, who are trying to turn everyone into magic wands.
- Students who are not tagged should avoid being tagged by the magicians and also help undo the spell for students who have become magic wands.
- Rotate the magicians so that everyone has a chance to be the magician.

Variations:

You can make undoing the magic wand spell more animated with a dance and a song.



Developed by Rebecca Mohler, MA, OTR/L, Shannon Kerns, MOT, OTR/L & Susan Bazyk, PhD, OTR/L for *Every Moment Counts* (2014). Revised 2021.