



Refreshing Recess Environmental Analysis

Instructions: Plan a date and time to observe the recess period for a particular grade or period. Let the supervisors know ahead of time that you'll be observing to see how the students on your caseload are participating. During the observation, try to be an inconspicuous observer. Aim to 'fit in' by looking friendly, walking around casually and saying 'hi' to students and showing an interest. Informally ask students what they like or don't like about recess. Remember that it's important to observe both indoor and outdoor recess!

Use this form to guide your observations of recess. Your focus will be on the physical, social and emotional, and sensory aspects of the environment. Note any concerns and/or positive qualities. Provide comments and suggestions in the right hand column.

School: _____ Grade level: _____ Date: _____

___ Indoor recess (note location _____) ___ Outdoor recess (note location _____)

Environmental Aspects	Concerns or challenges	Positive qualities or strengths	Describe & Make Suggestions
<p><u>Transition to and from recess</u> Students know the established routine and cooperate in going to and from recess. The process is orderly.</p>			
<p><u>Behaviors/Routines</u> Rules are clearly stated and reinforced by supervisors & teacher. Rules are written and posted in visible location or reviewed in class.</p>			
<p><u>Describe Social Environment:</u> Students' interactions → Students appear to be having fun, playing together, and getting along. Students include each other. Students share materials.</p>			
<p><u>Friendships.</u> Students seem to have at least one friend. Are certain students excluded? Loners? Tune-into friendship groups.</p>			
<p><u>Students with disabilities and/or emotional challenges.</u> Note their participation and enjoyment in recess. Are they included in groups? Any signs of bullying? If there are challenges, specify.</p>			



Environmental Aspects	Concerns or challenges	Positive qualities or strengths	Describe & Make Suggestions
<p><u>Recess Supervisors</u> Do supervisors interact in positive ways with students? Greet them by name? Smile? Are supervisors prepared to do their jobs (provide active supervision; foster active play & games; promote positive behaviors; able to resolve conflict)</p>			
<p><u>Playground toys & equipment (describe)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety? • Attractive? • Safe? • Adequate amount? • List types of toys/equipment • Identify any dangerous materials 			Describe.
<p><u>Play activities & games</u> Students actively engage in enjoyable play and games</p>			Describe types of play.
<p><u>Students are physically active</u> Have opportunities to walk, run, skip, jump Appear to enjoy active play</p>			Describe active play.
<p><u>Students have opportunities to engage in adult-led structured activities</u> Note approximate percentage of time Describe types of structured activities</p>			Describe structured activities.
<p><u>Students have opportunities to take part in unstructured play</u> Note approximate percentage of time Describe types of unstructured play</p>			Describe unstructured play.



Overall, rate your perception of students' participation and enjoyment of recess.

	Low	Average	High
Student enjoyment of social interaction with peers, friendships, and including others			
Student enjoyment of active play activities; do they seem happy			
Supervisor enjoyment in interacting with students; friendly with positive interaction?			

Recess Supervisors – Observations of ‘active supervision’.

- Ratio of adults to students (approximate): At minimum, there should be 1 adult for every 40-50 students. The more adult ‘presence’ during recess, the better.
- Identify which of the following elements of active supervision were observed; make comments
 ___ Adults frequently and deliberately move around the recess area, providing particular attention to problem areas (e.g. students waiting in line)

___ Systematically scan the recess area for positive behaviors (gives positive reinforcement) and challenging behaviors (re-directs)

___ Give behavior specific praise occasionally (‘I appreciate how you’re including others in your game.’ ‘Thank you for sharing your toys.’ Aim for 3 positive comments for every corrective statement.

___ Interacts with students in a positive and caring way. Smiles, calls students by name, shows an interest in students’ lives (e.g. asks students about their day; shows an interest in what they’re doing).

Describe the **STRENGTHS** of the current Recess environment/experience:



Describe **students' at-risk** of experiencing challenges during recess (social, sensory-based, motor, etc.) – Identify any students who might need additional supports or accommodations in order to participate and enjoy their recess.

Make **SUGGESTIONS** for changes that could be made to improve the Recess environment/experience so that students can enjoy playing and socializing with friends and so supervisors can enjoy their job.

Completed by: _____



Developed by Susan Bazyk, PhD, OTR/L for *Every Moment Counts* (2014, revised in 2021)
Refer to www.everymomentcounts.org for all the information needed to implement the Refreshing Recess program.