



Refreshing Recess Model Program Expansion  
**Week #11 Lesson Plan: Let's enjoy recess!**

**Theme:** Let's enjoy recess. Congratulations on making it to the last week of the Refreshing Recess Expansion Program! This final week focuses on helping students integrate skills from previous program weeks into everyday recess interactions. Supervisors will be encouraged to continue facilitating these interactions upon program completion, including:

- Friendship formation
- Teamwork
- Fitness, inclusion
- Bullying prevention
- Positive thinking
- Emotional regulation
- Mindfulness
- Coping strategies

Supplemental recess ideas will be shared with recess supervisors for future use.

**Objectives:**

1. By the end of the Refreshing Recess program, at least 75% of students will be able to correctly demonstrate at least three different deep breathing exercises that they can use as calming strategies for stress management.
2. Throughout the Refreshing Recess program, at least 75% of students will be open to trying new games as evidenced by actively engaging in the group activity/game each week, indicated through weekly documentation by program leader(s).

**Supporting materials (downloadable):**

- Recess Activities – Ideas for Indoor and Outdoor Recess

**Materials from other sources/authors:**

- The Importance of Mental Health Awareness in Schools  
<https://www.wgu.edu/heyteach/article/importance-mental-health-awareness-schools1810.html>
- Follow These Steps to Ease Student Anxiety in Your Classroom  
<https://www.wgu.edu/heyteach/article/follow-these-steps-ease-student-anxiety-your-classroom1809.html>



## Action steps for occupational therapist (OT) and other staff leading the program.

### BEFORE the 11<sup>th</sup> session:

1. **OT:** Read supporting materials related to the importance of mental health promotion in schools. Reinforce these strategies in conversations with students and recess supervisors.  
Gather the materials for Week #11's activity – *Minute-to-Win-It*
2. **Recess supervisors, teachers, and principal** → Give them the links to “The Importance of Mental Health Awareness in Schools” and “Follow These Steps to Ease Student Anxiety in Your Classroom” before the recess session. These are supplementary resources to reinforce the need for continued attention to mental health promotion following the end of this program.

### DURING Day of the session – The OT is present during recess to introduce the program and facilitate the group activity.

1. Congratulate the students on completing the program. Explain the importance of integrating all skills they've learned into everyday interactions so that everyone can enjoy recess.
2. Introduce the recess activity for the week → *Minute-to-Win-It Mini Games* (See next pages).
3. Facilitate activities and interactions, problem-solve obstacles that may come up, and offer support to recess supervisors during this time
4. Touch base with the recess supervisors at the end of the program. How do you think it went? What did you observe? Do you have any suggestions? Remind them that next week you will be giving them a post-program survey.

### Tier 2 & 3 Strategies – Occupational Therapist:

- Tune into students who may be struggling to participate and enjoy recess activities and/or interact with peers. Look out for the ‘loners’ - he/she may struggle with knowing how to enter a group or may have experienced bullying.
- Note those who might be demonstrating issues related to sensory processing (e.g. hypersensitivity to noise), motor control, and/or social participation (e.g. friendship issues).
- Begin to consider accommodations and supports needed to help students at-risk of or experiencing challenges during recess. 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 the Refreshing Recess Expansion Program!



## Week #11 Recess Activity: Minute-to-Win-it Mini Games

**Setting:** Indoor or outdoor recess

**Equipment needed:** Plastic cups, balloons, cookies, tissue boxes, marshmallows, M&Ms, streamers, and water bottles

### Rules/Directions:

1. Split the students into teams of 7-8 people.
2. Each round, they will choose one player (or more as indicated below) to participate in the challenge.
3. Students will have one minute per challenge to complete the task. Whichever team(s) complete it (or get the farthest) win that round.
4. Listed below are 10 mini games chosen for this age group that require few materials:

#### **Movin' On Up**

- Give each player a stack of at least 20 plastic cups
- Make sure all cups are the same color except for one
- The cup that is a different color should be placed on the bottom
- Players must take one cup at a time off the top and place it on the bottom of the stack
- Their goal is to move the different cup from the bottom up to the top of the stack

#### **Marshmallow Toss**

- This challenge requires each team to choose two players
- Players stand 5-6 feet away from each other, one with an empty plastic cup and one with a cup of marshmallows
- The player with the marshmallows must try to throw them into their partner's cup
- The partner is allowed to move the cup to catch it if needed

#### **Blown Away**

- Set up a row of 15 empty cups in front of each player
- Give each player an empty balloon
- They must blow up the balloon and release the air to knock over all the cups in their line

#### **Defying Gravity**

- For this mini game, have the teams choose 3 players from their team
- Blow up one balloon per team
- Players must work together to keep the balloon up in the air for the entire minute



### **Choosing Cups**

- Before the game, place a sticker on the bottom of a single, plastic cup
- Mix up this cup among 35 other plastic cups and set them all out on the table
- Fill up each cup partially with water
- To goal of this game is to locate the cup with the sticker on the bottom
- Each time a player chooses a cup to pick up and look at the bottom, they must then set it back down unless it is the cup with the sticker
- Have players move as fast as they can without spilling any of the water

### **Face the Cookie**

- Each player receives a cookie that they will place on their forehead
- By only moving their facial muscles (no hands) players must get the cookie from their forehead into their mouth

### **Hanky Panky**

- Each player receives a full tissue box
- They will have one minute to empty the entire tissue box, pulling one tissue out at a time

### **Scoop/Suck it Up**

- Each player will receive a bowl with 10 M&Ms in it, as well as an empty bowl
- They will have to transfer the M&Ms one at a time from one bowl to the other
- They can pick between scooping them with a spoon (placed in their mouth/no hands) or by using the suction through a straw in their mouth (hands allowed)
- Encourage collaboration among team members to agree on the best method

### **Wrap It Up**

- This mini game will require two players per team
- One player will wrap up the other player like a present using a colorful streamer
- See if the players can use the whole roll in one minute

### **Stick the Landing**

- Give each player a partially filled water bottle
- Instruct them to begin by holding the water bottle at the top by the cap
- They must flip the water bottle in the air and have it land right-side-up on the table
- Give them as many tries as needed before a team can stick the landing

