



PLAYWORKS
EDUCATION ENERGIZED

PLAYWORKS OVERVIEW

Playworks is a national nonprofit organization that supports learning by providing safe, healthy and inclusive play and physical activity to schools at recess and throughout the entire school day.

Research shows that play is essential to child development and an invaluable tool for improving school climate. And quality recess and playtime also helps children return to the classroom more focused and ready to learn.

Playworks is the only nonprofit organization in the country to send trained, full-time coaches to low-income, urban schools, where they transform recess and play into a positive experience that helps kids and teachers get the most out of every learning opportunity throughout the school day. These coaches become part of the school community, working full-time to provide organized play and physical activity through the five components of the Playworks program. They organize games and activities during recess, provide individual class game times and run a leadership development program during school hours. They also run Playworks tutoring and physical activity programs and developmental sports leagues during after school hours.

While nearly everyone agrees that kids need time to play and expend energy during the school day, most principals, teachers and school nurses agree that recess times can be the toughest part of the day. Recesses are often the flash point for playground fights, discipline referrals and injuries.

In working with hundreds of low-income schools throughout the country, however, Playworks has found recess to be an untapped opportunity to increase physical activity among students. Since nearly every school in America allows some recess time each day, this time can be an unsurpassed chance to not only get kids active, but also to teach a number of valuable life lessons such as cooperation, conflict resolution and teamwork.

Classroom teachers in schools that partner with Playworks report they reclaim up to **36 hours and more** of class time each year, simply by providing a fun and appealing structured recess that replaces the drama and discipline potential with inclusive and engaging physical activity.

Playworks also provides full training and technical assistance to schools, districts and organizations that wish to include inclusive, healthy play as part of a positive learning environment.

Operating since 1996, Playworks will partner with more than 170 schools nationwide this year, reaching more than 70,000 children on a daily basis. With recent support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Playworks is fulfilling an ambitious national expansion effort with the goal of operating in 27 cities across the country by 2012, providing play and physical activities to more than 1 million students.