



Healthy Schools Network, Inc.

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Concerned about playground conditions or recess time at school?

If children are not allowed to go out for recess during the school week, or if there is no outside recess area, or if you are concerned about the unhealthy conditions of the playground, here are some tips on how to get organized for effective action.

- **Get the facts.** Document the problem. Invite a friend to help; interview school officials; ask for a copy of school policy or local regulations (some cities and state have laws requiring outdoor play); take pictures or samples. Compile your findings.
- **Build out the base of information.** Share your findings with school officials, school nurses, teachers, coaches, other parents. Present your findings to the PTO or PTA, the local school health and safety committee* or wellness committee, or booster club. Ask the group to get involved.



**As of October 1999, all public and charter schools in New York State must establish a Health and Safety Committee made up of parents, representatives of bargaining units and administrators. The committee reviews school facility health & safety concerns, recommends fixes as necessary, and reports annually to the local board of education.*



- If your school district does not have a committee, start your own! Organize an interest meeting, put up flyers, find local experts, listen to what others have to say and make these discussions a regular event! Next thing you know, you have a committee!
- Organize a “Playground Inspection Day” with your group, conduct a visual inspection of the playground, following the tips suggested in this guide.

For more information, check out other free guides and posters from Healthy Schools Network’s Clearinghouse (<http://healthyschools.org/clearinghouse.html>) that address children’s environmental health & safety:

- *Guide to School Health And Safety Committees: How to Promote Child and Adult Environmental Health Protection*
- *Parent’s Guide to School Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)*

Knowledge is power! Reading this guide is a great first step to knowing and understanding your rights and environmental health issues and hazards.

www.HealthySchools.org

www.NationalHealthySchoolsDay.org