Recess is a very social, relaxed and unstructured time during a child's school day. For some students this may be a difficult time of the day due to the unstructured nature of recess. This can be a great teaching opportunity to work on social skills and small group participation.

If we teach children how to play, how to include children of all ability levels and how to change game rules perhaps then all children will enjoy themselves. Each student may become more successful, have more fun and see that every child has unique qualities. Children need to understand that rules for games are not written in stone, modifications can be made so all children can play and have fun.

"Recess Buddies" are peer partners who participate in selected activities with an individual student. Two per recess would be recommended. One recess per day is chosen for the "Recess Buddies". This should be a consistent recess to help establish a routine. A recess board is used, this designates if the recess is inside/outside, who the "Recess Buddies" will be for the day and activity choices the student selects. The student selects 2-3 activities that will be done during the recess time (number of activities depends upon their ability to make choices and transition between activities). Photos of the activity choices or line drawings with the activity written out should be available to help the student make activity selections. Photos and the written name of the peers are also displayed on the board. The activity selections should be done just prior to recess and reviewed with the student as the peers arrive. Peers meet the student at his/her classroom. Appropriate greetings should be exchanged, activity choices stated,
equipment carried out if needed. A box of equipment should be kept somewhere easily accessible.

During recess, peers engage the student in activity- modifications may be made as needed. Cue the student before changing activities and before recess is over. The peers walk the student back to class and return the equipment. A recess activity log may be kept. This would be for students to record; who were the peers and what activities they participated in, along with anecdotal notes on student behavior or other significant information that occurred during the recess session. Record keeping provides information that may be useful for program planning in the future. Activity selections may vary each month, depending upon the student's ability to handle change and also to decrease boredom. "Recess Buddies" is a wonderful opportunity to incorporate social skills training, as well as to provide structure and recreational to recess. Recognition of the "Recess Buddies" may be done at the end of the year to thank them for their involvement.

Before beginning this program, the selected "Recess Buddies" should have an awareness session that includes information about the student they are to work with. The teacher, parent or paraprofessional working with the child could describe the student's likes/dislikes, abilities and skills that they are working on in the classroom. "Recess Buddies" should be encouraged to ask questions at this time. Individual Differences (Disability Awareness) activities are available through the Heartland AEA Adapted Physical Education Consultants.

**RECESS ACTIVITIES**

The following are suggested activities, this is not an all-inclusive list.

- Badminton
- Bean Bag Target Games
- Bocce-can be played with beanbags
- Bubbles
- Bowling- use small cones or fewer pins if several students are playing
Catch- use Nerf or lighter weight balls.

Chalk Drawing

Checkers

Cheer Contest- practice school cheers or chants

Dribbling Activities- dribble down a line, around cones, dribble tag

Frisbees- foam or regular

Follow the Leader- encourage the leader to change the movements but not too quickly.

Hopscotch- there are various patterns to try.

Horseshoes

Hula Hoops
  * Use as a target
  * Move- in, out, around, over, under
  * Play Musical hoops- when the music stops remove a hoop but not a student, all participants will eventually be in one hoop

Jump rope
  * Twirled long rope
  * Self-twirled rope
  * Long rope swung back and forth
  * Snake the rope by shaking it on the ground
  * Jump over a stationary rope

Kickball

Limbo

Obstacle Course- have students move: over, under and around objects. Different movement patterns can also be used (run to the cone, jump to the wall....).

Scoops- use to practice catching

Shoot Baskets- take turns shooting and rebounding. Points can be given for hitting the rim, backboard or net. A hula hoop can be suspended from the hoop which will allow students to toss the ball through the hula hoop if they are unable to toss the ball into the regular hoop.

4 Square
Tic Tac Toe- use a large sheet and markers or chalk
Twister
T-Ball

**INDOOR ACTIVITIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board Games</th>
<th>Bocce</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bowling</td>
<td>Building Blocks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catch</td>
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<td>Marker Board</td>
<td>Ring Toss</td>
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<tr>
<td>Twister</td>
<td>Uno</td>
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</tbody>
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**SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT**

You may check with the Physical Education Instructor and borrow some equipment. Recess equipment should be in a location that is easily accessible. You do not need all this equipment to develop a recess program- these are suggestions.

**BALLS**
- Beach balls, Nerf balls, playground balls, Slo-Mo balls, mini-basketballs
- Bean bags and Targets
- Bowling pins and Ball
- Bubbles
- Chalk
- Checkers
- Frisbees- foam or regular
- Jump ropes- long and short
- Horseshoes
- Ring Toss
- Scoops
- T-Ball Equipment- lightweight bats/balls
- Twister
This is a sample of the “Recess Buddies” choice board. A pocket folder works well for this.

**ROBIN'S RECESS BUDDIES**

**TODAY'S RECESS IS:** (velcro if inside or outside recess)

**MY BUDDIES ARE:** (name/or photo of buddies)

**INSIDE CHOICES**

**OUTSIDE CHOICES**

(the choice cards may be photos or line drawings of the activities. There would be separate activity cards for inside and outside)

**ACTIVITY CHOICES**

(velcro the activities for the day here)