



## Maintaining a Safe Playground During COVID-19

School districts should consider the following information in determining if school playgrounds and play structures will be used. Districts should consult their local Public Health Department for current guidance.

### **Playground usage practices:**

- Wash hands before and after time on playground. Instruct students on proper hand washing practices (i.e. wash hands often for at least 20 seconds). Hand sanitizer may also be available.
- Wear face coverings as directed by district. Students must be supervised while on play structures to ensure face coverings do not entangle on equipment.
- Maintain a 6-foot social distance at all times. Increase supervision to ensure physical distancing.
- Offer outdoor play in staggered shifts to reduce numbers on playground at one time.
- Reduce crowding in and around the play structure. Advise that only cohorts play on the structure during recess.
- Clean high touch surfaces between uses of the structure.

### **CDC guidelines suggest the following for cleaning play structures during COVID-19:**

- Outdoor areas like playgrounds generally require normal routine cleaning. Cleaning of play structures should be done after each use.
  - Clean items made of plastic or metal, grab bars, railings and other high touch areas and equipment.
  - Per CDC, cleaning and disinfection of wooden surfaces is not recommended.
  - Cleaning should not be done when children are near. Proper use of any cleaning materials, correct use of PPE, and safe storage of cleaning materials will be followed.

### **Alternative ideas and suggestions:**

- Avoid games that share equipment. If equipment needs to be shared, offer a USED and CLEAN bin to place equipment. Clean equipment between uses by different groups.
- Create games on the blacktop that will engage children and not involve physical contact. Paint lines every 6 feet so children will know where to line up for games.
- Choose games that do not need the use of shared equipment and that fit on the footprint of your black top.
- Introduce games such as relays, individual activity station circuit challenges, walking or running challenges
- Be creative! Seek the input from physical education teachers.
- During recess, maintain cohorts at all times and do not allow groups to co-mingle.

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### **Resources for alternative play ideas:**

- Playworks: <https://www.playworks.org/resources/>
- Shape America:  
[https://www.shapeamerica.org/standards/guidelines/strategies\\_for\\_recess\\_in\\_schools.aspx](https://www.shapeamerica.org/standards/guidelines/strategies_for_recess_in_schools.aspx)
- Mapping a playground: <https://www.recesslab.org/resources/map-your-playground/>

### **Additional Resources:**

CDC: Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

CDC: Reopening Guidance:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>

CDC: Visiting Parks and Recreational Facilities:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/visitors.html>

EPA: Disinfectants for use against COVID-19

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19>

National Program for Playground Safety

<https://www.playgroundsafety.org/topics/topic/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-response>

CDPH document

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Outdoor%20Playgrounds%20and%20other%20Outdoor%20Recreational%20Facilities.aspx>

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