

Recess and Cold Weather Guidelines

Green Weather Conditions

Green Weather conditions are indicated by an outdoor temperature of at least 50 degrees Fahrenheit with winds ranging from calm to 15 miles per hour, or 40 degrees Fahrenheit with winds ranging from calm to five miles per hour. Green is acceptable for outdoor activities for most children.

Although children may resist wearing appropriate cooler-weather outdoor clothing, playground supervisors need to establish clearly that proper attire such as hats, mittens and jackets be worn when warranted.

Yellow Weather Conditions

Yellow weather conditions are more limiting. In a yellow condition, temperatures can be as high as 50 degrees Fahrenheit with winds of 20 miles per hour or more, or 40 degrees Fahrenheit with winds of 10 miles per hour or greater. Temperatures can also drop to 30 degrees Fahrenheit with winds of 10 miles per hour or 20 degrees Fahrenheit with winds of five miles per hour.

Playground supervisors should observe children carefully, since children can become too cold from exposure, or too warm from activity and heavy clothing. Often younger children will want to continue outdoor playtime in spite of showing signs that they are either too hot or too cold. Supervisors may shorten the duration of outdoor activity time.

Red Weather Conditions

Red weather conditions include temperatures in the 30 degree Fahrenheit range with winds of 15 miles per hour, or the 20 degree Fahrenheit range with winds of 10 miles per hour, or any conditions that are colder and/or windier.

During a red condition, cold temperatures combined with wind chill factors can become a health risk. Appropriately dressed children may have very limited outdoor play periods under vigilant supervision. Outdoor recess time may be shortened or canceled according to weather conditions.