USING RECESS EVIDENCE TO IMPACT POLICY

Aaron Beighle, Ph.D.
University of Kentucky
The Fourth R  (Waite-Stupiansky & Findley 2001)

- “Time scheduled during the school day but outside the classroom allowing students to participate in both physical and social activities of their choosing”  (Beighle, 2012)

- Provides time to:
  - Refresh the brain
  - Socialize
  - Have fun
  - Solve problems
  - Play
  - Be active?????
What we know about recess

- Girls are active 15%-52% of recess time; Boys are active 16%-68% of recess time
- Recess can contribute as much as 40% of a child’s daily physical activity
- Only 12% of states require recess
- Only 20% of districts have wellness policies requiring recess
- Recess offered throughout the day can improve student behavior and concentration
Increase Physical Activity During Recess: What works?

- **Training recess supervisors**
  Connolly & McKenzie 1995; Huberty, Siahpush, Beighle et al 2010

- **Painting playgrounds with murals and lines**
  Loucaides, Jago, and Charalambous 2009; Ridgers, Stratton, Fairclough et al 2007; Stratton and Mullan 2005)

- **Dividing the play space into “activity zones”**
  Ridgers, Stratton, Fairclough, et al 2007

- **Providing recess equipment encourages children to be active**
  Verstraete, Cardon, De Clercq, et al 2006

- **Integrating several low-cost approaches can increase student physical activity**
  Loucaides, Jago, and Charalambous 2009; Huberty, Siahpush, Beighle et al 2010
Applying What We Know to Recess Policy

- Policy requiring a safe environment with activity promoting equipment and supervisors trained to encourage physical activity

- Regulations calling for schools to partner with community stakeholders to enhance physical activity during recess

- Policy requiring schools to designate a school physical activity director to oversee recess offerings

- Regulations offering state and federal incentives for schools to offer evidence-based approaches during recess

- Policy recommending daily recess for students

[www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/npao/strategies.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/npao/strategies.htm)
Points to Ponder

- More frequent, but shorter, recess periods
- Unintended consequences of policies suggesting activity time during recess can not be taken away for punishment
- Temperature policies
- Extra recess as a reward or party “treat”
- Recess Activity of the Week
Thank You!