



# Time to Play

## Increasing Physical Activity through a Mandatory Daily Active Recess Policy in New York



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## **DASH-NY**

### **Designing a Strong and Healthy New York**

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- **Funding from NYS Department of Health, DASH-NY serves as New York State's Obesity Prevention Policy Center & Coalition**
- **DASH-NY convenes a Steering Committee & partners who're national, state, & local leaders representing multiple sectors**
- **Policy Analysis and Research, TA and Training, Resources**
- **Workgroups!**
  - Active Communities, Clinical & Community Linkages, Economic & Community Development, Food Policy, plus...**
  - Healthy Schools & Child Care Workgroup***

## DAILY ACTIVE RECESS!

- Strategy to increase physical activity, separate from PE, in K-5 + reduce health disparities among NYS youth
- 40% of NYC public school students ages 6-12 years, 32% of the rest of the state are overweight or obese (2010).

<b>White, non-Hispanic</b>	<b>Black, non-Hispanic</b>
<b>28.3%</b>	<b>37.1%</b>
<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>
<b>29.9%</b>	<b>45.1%</b>



## 2- to 4-year-olds from low-income families

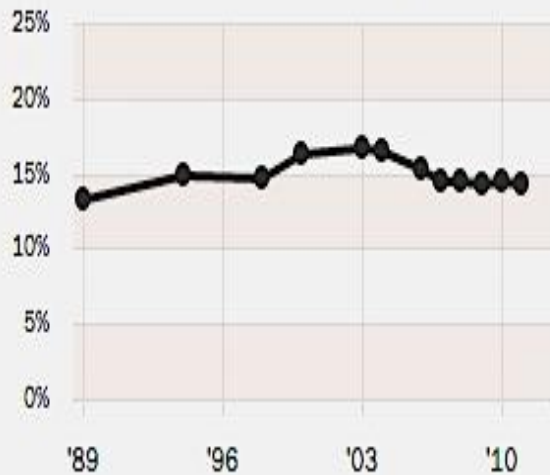
Current obesity rate (2011)

**14.3%**

Rank among states (2011)

**15**<sub>/41</sub>

Historical rates (1989-2011)



Source: [fasinfat.org/pednss2011](http://fasinfat.org/pednss2011)

## 10- to 17-year-olds

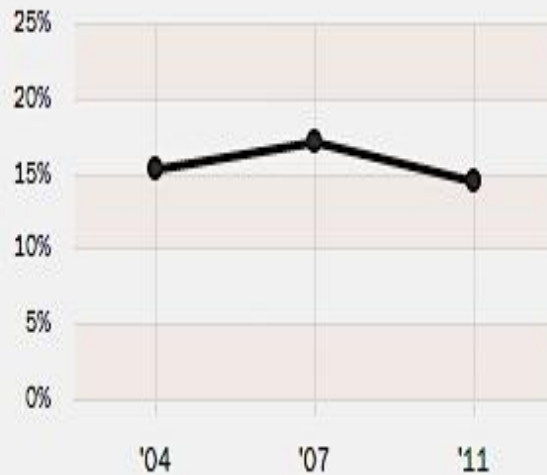
Current obesity rate (2011)

**14.5%**

Rank among states (2011)

**25**<sub>/51</sub>

Historical rates (2004-2011)



Source: [fasinfat.org/nsch2011](http://fasinfat.org/nsch2011)

## High school students

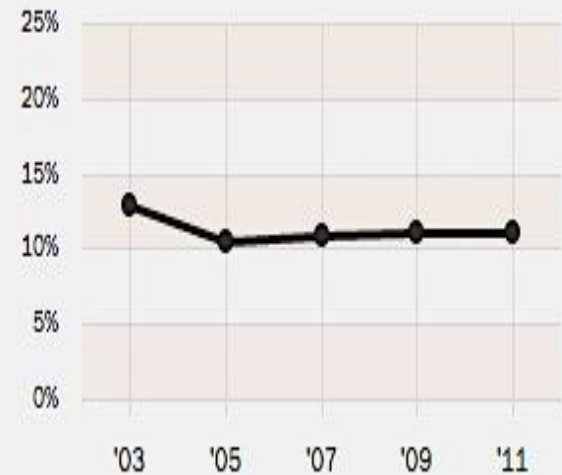
Current obesity rate (2011)

**11.0%**

Rank among states (2011)

**30**<sub>/43</sub>

Historical rates (2003-2011)



Source: [fasinfat.org/yrbs2011](http://fasinfat.org/yrbs2011)

## MANDATORY DAILY ACTIVE RECESS

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- **Problem: Disparities**

- Schools with >50% minority enrollment or the lowest income levels offer fewest minutes of recess (RWJF, 2007)

- **Problem: PE req. not being met (Comptroller Report, 2008)**

- NY K-5 schools are not offering PE 120 min/week
  - Recess does NOT replace or eliminate PE

- **Policy Solution = Mandatory Daily Active Recess!**

- All students reap the benefits of daily physical activity
  - Physical activity up to 20 minutes
  - Physically active free play or structured games

# MANDATORY DAILY ACTIVE RECESS POLICY GUIDE

**DASH**  
**NY**

**TIME TO PLAY**

IMPROVING HEALTH AND ACADEMICS THROUGH  
RECESS IN NEW YORK ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

A Mandatory Daily Active Recess Policy Implementation Guide

Monica Chierici, Elyse Powell, Rachel Manes

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## MANDATORY DAILY ACTIVE RECESS INFO SHEET

### MANDATORY DAILY ACTIVE RECESS

Time to Play: Improving Health and Academics  
through Recess in New York Elementary Schools



#### What is mandatory daily active recess?

Mandatory daily active recess is a policy approach that establishes recess as a time for students to engage in physically active free play or structured games. It is not a component of physical education but is intended to provide children with time to be physically active and engage in free play, which is shown to have many benefits for students.

The AAP recommends 60 minutes of daily physical activity that can be met through recess.

#### Why should I advocate for a mandatory daily active recess policy in my school?

1. Sixty-four percent of elementary school children don't get the recommended daily physical activity.
2. Active recess can account for as much one third of a child's recommended daily physical activity.
3. Physical activity throughout the school day can improve focus in the classroom, provide psychosocial benefits, and has been shown to increase academic performance.

#### Do I need to work in a school to advocate for mandatory daily active recess?

Anyone can be an active recess advocate! Previous successes with mandatory daily active recess have shown that advocates can be school officials, parents, community organizations, and local government officials. Ultimately, implementing mandatory daily active recess is a collaborative process that engages many stakeholders, both within and outside of the school.

The National Association of Sport and Physical Education recommends that K-5 students be provided with at least one daily 20-minute session of recess.



## Rochester, NY

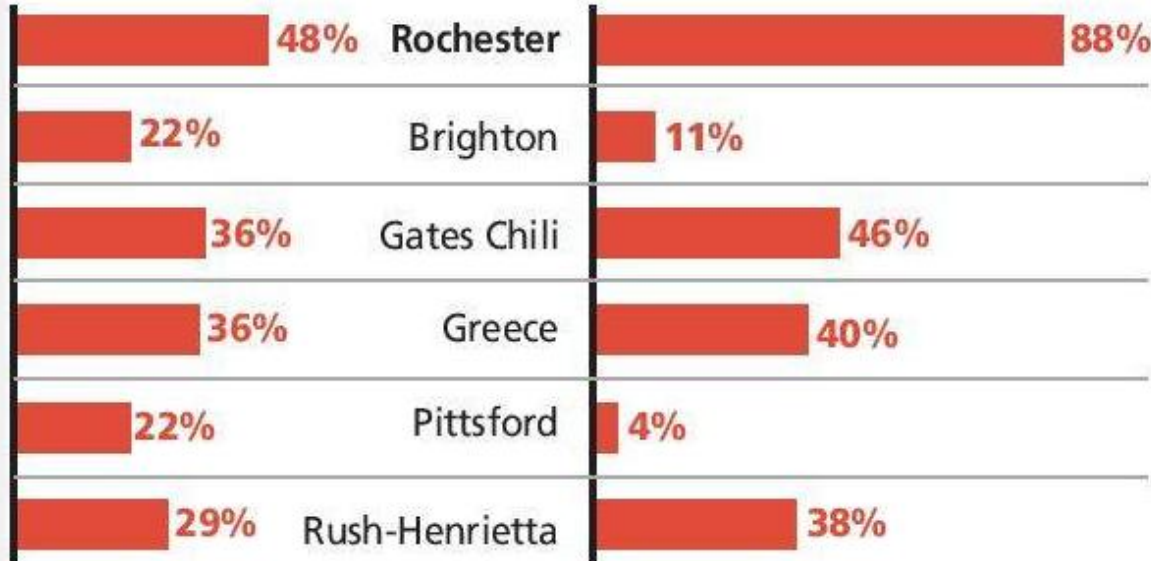
### The connection of obesity and poverty

The percentage of Rochester students considered overweight or obese is significantly higher than in suburban districts. The rate also correlates with the city's high concentration of poverty, as measured by the percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced price lunches.

#### Obese or overweight

#### Free and reduced lunch

A sample of percentages for area school districts



SOURCES: N.Y. state Dept. of Health and Education Dept.

NOTE: Sample size varied by district.

KEVIN M. SMITH/GRAPHICS EDITOR



## Rochester's Success Story: The Process

- **Healthi Kids ([www.healthikids.org](http://www.healthikids.org)) Coalition agenda supports healthier, more active children in Rochester and Monroe County, NY**
- **Partner, Educate, Convene, and Advocate for a recess policy!**
- **Rochester Public School District included a mandatory daily active recess policy (2012-2013 school year)**





## Rochester's Success Story: Lessons Learned

- **Piloted the policy before implementing it district-wide**
- **Schools had difficulty ensuring that recess facilitated active play and structured games when it was held indoors**
- **Building-level policy detailed how mandatory daily active recess would happen in a variety of contingency situations**



## Rochester's Success Story: Lessons Learned

- **Creative solutions:**
  - **10 minutes of indoor activity at the beginning of the day**
  - **Teachers incorporate movement into classroom lessons**
- **School staff needed guidance on how to supervise recess, with a particular focus on conflict resolution**
- **Trainings, curriculum resources, Playworks!**



## Future Research Directions

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- **Future research should identify activities that support policy implementation**
- **Correlational studies link recess, student health, and academic performance**
- **Mandatory Daily Active Recess and Longitudinal Research**
  - **Does a recess policy lead to improved health outcomes?**
  - **Does a recess policy lead to improved academic scores?**
    - .....during childhood
    - .....during adolescence



## KEY DATA SOURCES

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Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (2007). *Recess Rules*. Princeton, NJ.

Office of the New York State Comptroller (2008). *School Districts' Compliance with Physical Education Regulations*. (OSC publication number 2008-MS-6) Albany, NY: U.S. Government Printing Office.

National Survey of Children's Health (2007) funded by Department of Health and Human Services, Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

NYC Fitnessgram (2009-2010), NYS Student Weight Status Category Report (2008-2010).

CDC (2013). *Vital Signs: Obesity Among Low-Income, Preschool-Aged Children — United States, 2008–2011*. *MMWR* 2013;62 (31):629–34.

## OUR CONTACT INFO

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