**Fun on the School Playground**

Kids used to play outside all the time. Today, concerns about safety limit them. But, most neighborhoods have a school playground. That’s at least one safe place where your family can enjoy outdoor fun! Most playgrounds have enough equipment for 30 minutes of active play. You can play even longer if you bring a ball and a couple of friends! Does your school playground need some work? Get your PTA involved. Work with them to make space for family activity.

**Plan**

- **After school:** Take 20 or 30 minutes for active play right after school. It will burn off some extra energy. And it will get kids’ brains ready to focus on homework or other lessons.
- **On the weekend:** Set aside family time to walk or bike to the school playground. Enjoy activities together there. Give everyone a turn to choose which games to play.
- **During vacations:** Most school playgrounds are open for fun year round. No need for cabin fever. Whether it is winter or summer, just head to the playground.

**Play**

- Here is a list of playground activities. Need more games? Forgot how to play Four-Square? No worries! A quick web search will help you find all kinds of fun ideas.
  - **Shoot some hoops.** Most schools have several kid-sized outdoor baskets.
  - **Slide and swing.** There’s fun for everyone on slides, swings and monkey bars.
  - **Kick a ball.** Footballs, soccer balls, dodge balls, Nerf® balls or any ball you find!
  - **Climb a wall.** Jungle gyms and climbing walls are fun ways to build strong arms.
  - **Bounce into a square.** Many playgrounds have several Four-Square courts.
  - **Toss a Frisbee®.** All it takes is a disc and a wide open space.
  - **Hop through a pattern.** Draw a chalk diagram and play hopscotch anywhere.
  - **Hide and seek or tag a friend.** These games keep everyone running around.
  - **Ride a bike or a trike.** For an extra challenge, set up a course with traffic cones.
  - **Walk, skip or jump.** Free-form play is good for kids, adults and dogs, too!

**Enjoy**

- Make it fun! Do it together! Playing together at the school playground is good for kids’ physical and mental health. And it will help them do better in the classroom too.