

## Playworks 2017-2018 School Year Media Fact Sheet

**WHAT:** Playworks is the leading national nonprofit leveraging the power of play to transform children's social and emotional health. Through direct-service coaching and training, Playworks partners with elementary schools, districts, and after-school programs to integrate games into recess to create a welcoming place for every child on the playground. With an emphasis on social-emotional learning and skill-building, students feel included while being active and developing valuable skills needed to thrive in the classroom and beyond. Playworks is ensuring that 1 million kids at 2,000 schools experience safe and healthy play every day in the 2017-2018 school year.

**WHY:** Many educators report recess as being the most challenging point of the school day, during which conflicts arise that can carry into the classroom. Recess is often undervalued and many kids end up on the sidelines. In the last decade, nearly half of all school districts nationwide have either completely eliminated or reduced specified time for recess. Playworks is working to ensure that play is an integral and necessary part of the school day. What happens on the playground affects an entire school culture. Research as reported by [The Atlantic](#) suggests that students who play develop healthier lifestyles, are more attentive in class, and achieve greater academic, social, and emotional success. Playworks offers an externally-validated program that has a positive impact on kids, school staff, and school culture.

**IMPACT:** Playworks programming is designed to get kids in the game and to help schools build a community of playing together to make recess safe, inclusive, and fun for everyone. A 2013 evaluation of the implementation and impact of Playworks programming, conducted by Mathematica Policy Research and Stanford University, revealed that compared to non-Playworks schools, Playworks schools see:

- a 43 percent difference in the way teachers rated bullying and discipline issues
- a 20 percent difference in the way teachers rated students feelings of safety on the playground
- a 43 percent difference in the amount of time spent in vigorous physical activity during recess
- a 34 percent difference in time spent transitioning from recess to the classroom

**HOW:** A thoughtful approach to recess can improve children's physical health and social-emotional learning. Playworks schools make the most of recess by implementing Playworks curriculum on the playground. The nonprofit also offers after-school developmental sports leagues that give youth an equal opportunity, regardless of athletic ability, academic standing and finances, to participate in organized sports and learn components of teamwork. The three primary ways Playworks serves elementary schools include:

- **Coach Model:** A full-time Playworks staff member works onsite at one school year-round to run all Playworks programs during and after-school and serves as an engaged adult role model for youth. Playworks coaches are placed in schools where 50 percent of the student population qualifies for free and reduced lunch.
- **TeamUp Model:** One Playworks staff member oversees Playworks programming in four schools, providing faculty and staff the training, tools, and consultation needed to empower a sustainable recess playground team.
- **Playworks Pro:** Playworks provides school staff members with hands-on professional development workshops and collaborative consultation to facilitate Playworks programming without a Playworks staff member onsite.

A recent [review](#) conducted by the RAND Corporation and commissioned by The Wallace Foundation found that Playworks offers one of the few social and emotional learning interventions for elementary schools that meet the highest criteria for evidence of impact under the Every Student Succeeds Act. The review examined outcomes of the Playworks Coach model, which includes classroom, outside of classroom and out of school time components. Qualifiers show how Playworks' school programming is designed to help students build valuable intrapersonal skills and to help schools build positive school climate to get kids in the game and to help schools build stronger communities.

**WHERE:** Currently, the Playworks Pro model is implemented in elementary schools in all 50 states. Playworks Coach and TeamUp serve elementary schools in 23 major cities across the U.S. By 2020, the nonprofit aims to enable 3.5 million kids in 7,000 elementary schools nationwide to experience safe and healthy play every day.

**CONNECT:** Find Playworks on social media: Facebook ([@MakeRecessCount](#)), Twitter ([@Playworks](#)), Instagram ([@PlayworksRecess](#)). For more information, visit: [www.playworks.org](http://www.playworks.org).

### Media Contacts:

Beth Eisen | [media@playworks.org](mailto:media@playworks.org) | (o) 510-844-7615 | (c) 973-615-1809  
Allison Epstein | [allison@teakmedia.com](mailto:allison@teakmedia.com) | (o) 617-269-7171 | (c) 203-915-8364  
Media Kit: [www.playworks.org/about/media](http://www.playworks.org/about/media)