

## **The Zone Playground and Indoor Physical Activity Model**

*The Zone Playground and Indoor Physical Activity Model* addresses the need to increase children's physical activity levels both outdoors and indoors within the school setting. This program has been in operation for five years in Solon Schools in Solon, Ohio and has served as a successful model for elementary recess. Many other school districts have now also integrated the Zone Playground Model with good results. The plan is designed to help physical education teachers train monitors or volunteers in the methods and curriculum necessary for its implementation. The system provides elementary children with four choices (zones) of activities during each outdoor session. The children can go to one or all zones during a recess period.

The choices include:

**Discovery Zone** –new activities are introduced that do not require prior skills.

**Walking Zone** – taking a brisk walk with a leader.

**Game Zone** - traditional activities such as soccer, basketball, football, etc.

**Free Play Zone** – playground equip, swings, slides, jump ropes, balls, hoops, etc.  
Provides freedom to “just play” without structure or organization.

On indoor days the children are led in high- energy activities that can be facilitated within the classroom setting or other building areas. The plan provides practical, efficient ways to do this.

In addition to increasing physical activity, another valuable reasons that schools have chosen to implement this program is that behavior problems, bullying, and injuries are all reduced with the plan. Data collected from various schools has substantiated the reduction in office referrals and injuries. Principals are most interested in reducing misbehaviors during the recess hour.

From a physical educator's perspective, the increase in physical activity that results from this model is very significant. The Center for Disease Control is currently working with the model and collecting data to verify the effects of the zone plan on physical activity levels.

A manual that details the entire plan is available for \$12. The manual contains 24 activity cards that help teachers and recess monitors implement the program. Staff training is also available for school districts. The training provides an overview of the program and instruction in many of the activities that help the model to work in both indoor and outdoor settings. The training is especially useful in preparing playground monitors for their new role in implementing the plan.

For more information contact Lois Carnes at [ECarnes@aol.com](mailto:ECarnes@aol.com) or (330) 701-8338  
To order a manual please remit \$12 per manual to Lois Carnes, 2971 Middleton Road, Hudson, Ohio 44236. (Checks made to Lois Carnes).