

Playworks Minnesota

2023 - 2024 School Year (SY): Impact Report

Who We Are:

At Playworks, we leverage play to promote healthy behaviors, enhance academic engagement, improve attendance, and nurture social competencies throughout the school day.

What We Do:

1. Collaborate and consult with schools to create a safe, positive, and engaging school day through recess and play.
2. Equip educators to build play into their school day for enhanced social/emotional learning.
3. Empower youth leaders to transform their school community through mentoring and role modeling.



Learn more here!



2023 - 2024 Impact

During the 2023 - 2024 SY, Playworks Minnesota served 19,310 students across 50 schools and youth organizations in the Twin Cities Metro Area.

Students demographics, 80% Students of Color, 17% English Language Learners, 73% Low Income, & 12% Special Education.

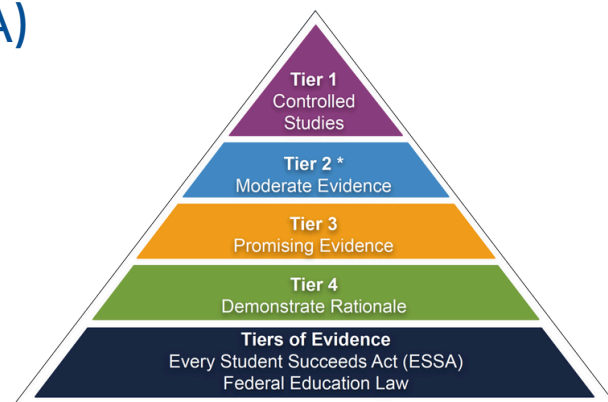


"Since partnering with Playworks we have seen an increase in kids trying to include other classmates in play as well as an increase in students trying to resolve conflicts on their own."
- Twin Cities Educator

What Research Says About Our Impact

TIER 1 INTERVENTION: Highest Level of Evidence Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Playworks is a Tier 1 Intervention under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Federal Education Law, backed by evidence from controlled study, as affirmed by the RAND Corp Review in 2017. We have 12 published studies and articles that demonstrate our impact.



TIER 1 CONTROLLED STUDY by Stanford University

PLAYWORKS SCHOOLS HAVE LESS BULLYING

Teachers in Playworks schools reported significantly less bullying and exclusionary behavior during recess*, a 43% difference in average rating scores!



STUDENTS FEEL SAFER AT SCHOOL

Playworks teachers' average rating of students' feelings of safety at school was 20% higher than the average ratings reported by teachers in control schools!.



STUDENTS ARE ENGAGED IN MORE VIGOROUS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Accelerometer data showed that children in Playworks schools spent significantly more time in vigorous physical activity at recess* (14% versus 10% of recess time, which is a 43% difference)!.



STUDENTS ARE READY TO LEARN



Teachers in Playworks schools reported spending significantly less time to transition from recess to learning activities (34% fewer minutes)!.

Student Development

- ▲ On-task Behavior
- ▲ Class Readiness
- ▲ Positive Language
- ▲ Leadership
- ▲ Empathy
- ▲ Problem Solving
- ▲ Critical Thinking
- ▲ Motivation
- ▲ Conflict Resolution
- ▲ Emotional Control
- ▲ Adaptability
- ▲ Confidence

School Climate

- ▲ Student Use of Positive Language
- ▲ Emotional & Physical Safety
- ▲ School Bonding
- ▲ Increased Attendance
- ▲ Student Connectedness

¹ For detailed information visit [Studies on Playworks](#)

Positive findings from a randomized controlled trial, Mathematica Stanford University 2013.*Tier 2 studies meet all criteria except threshold or 350 participants in more than 1 school district.

What Research Says About Our Impact

PLAYWORKS INCREASES ATTENDANCE

When school is fun, kids want to be there.



An independent evaluation by Stanford University found that the Playworks led to a statistically significant increase in attendance among elementary school children. That increase was greatest among chronically absent students.¹



Attendance Works recognizes Playworks as one of a select few programs with research-proven success in improving attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism. Featured in the "Portraits of Change" report, Playworks fosters a positive, inclusive school climate, ensuring students are present, engaged, and prepared for long-term success.²

PLAYWORKS LEVERAGES PLAY TO IMPACT MENTAL HEALTH

Strong Relationships, Sense of Belonging, Community at School



88% of teachers reported an increase in students' sense of belonging at school (Playing Fair)⁵

Junior Coaches showed statistically significant positive change in building their sense of bonding at the school (HSAR)⁴



Students are 5x more likely to have a positive interaction with an adult on the playground³

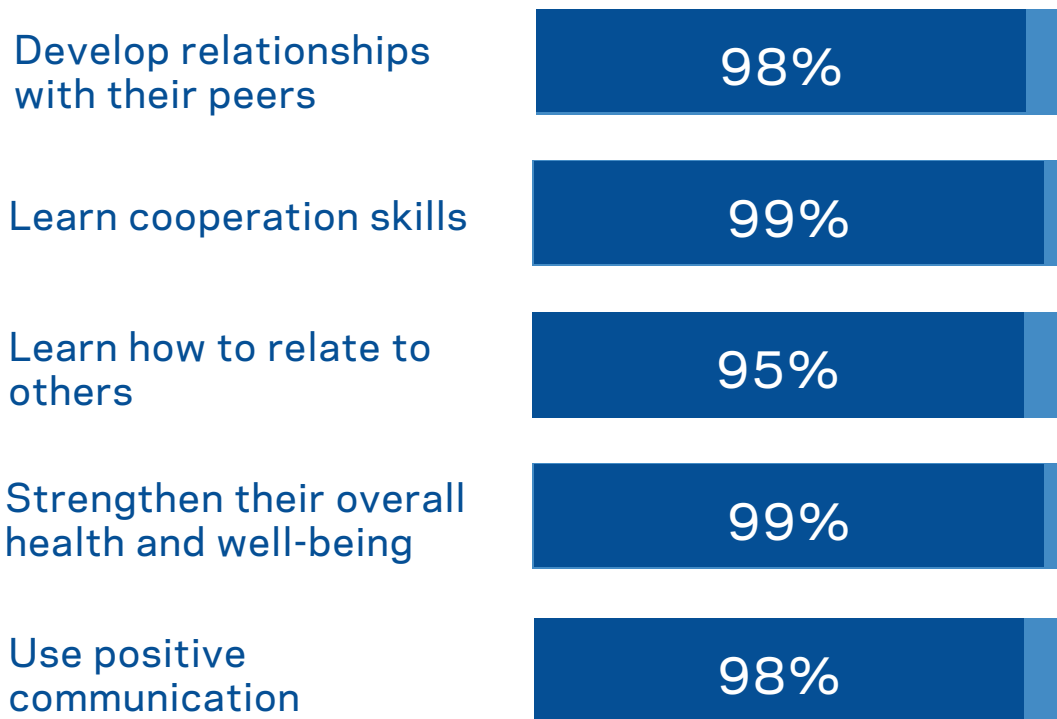
Playworks Junior Coaches (4th and 5th grade leaders) showed statistically significant positive change in building relationships with adults and peers⁴

1 Leos-Urbel, J. and Sanchez, M. (2015). The Relationship between Playworks Participation and Student Attendance in Two School Districts. Stanford, John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities; 2 Attendance Works & Everyone Graduates Center. (2017). Portraits of Change: Aligning School and Community Resources to Reduce Chronic Absence; 3 Massey, W. V. et al. (2017). "The impact of a multi-component physical activity programme in low-income elementary schools; 4Playworks.org/report/holistic-student-assessment-hsa; 5 <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/josh.12216>

2023 - 2024 Impact: What Educators Say

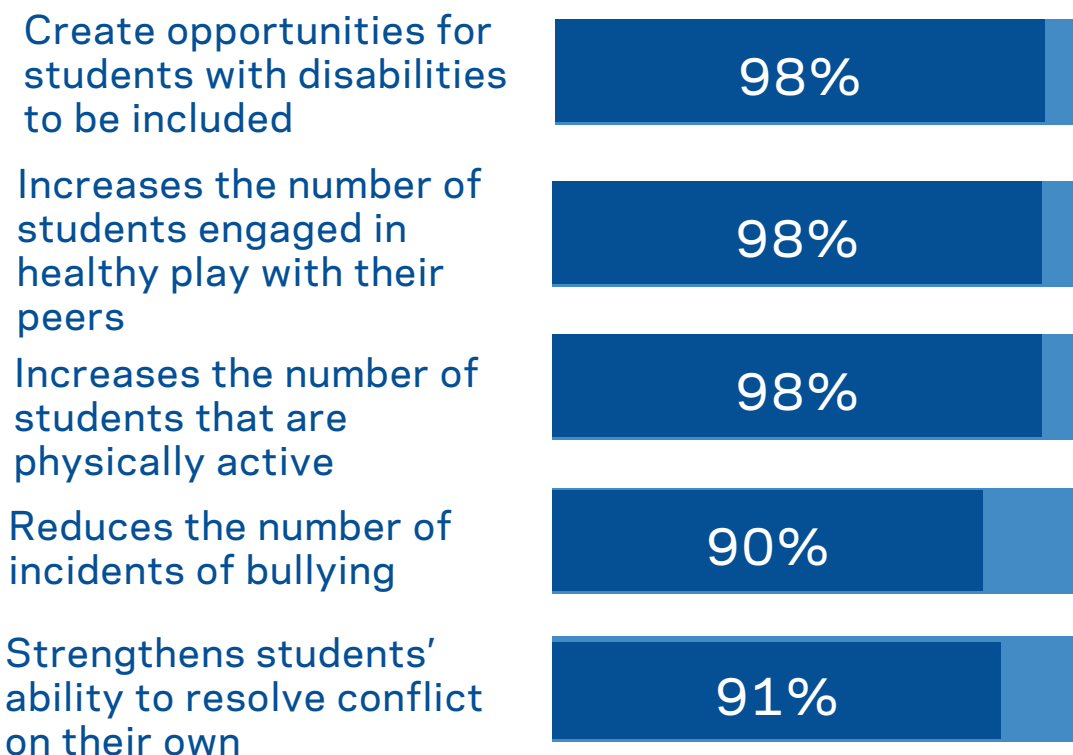
Playworks supports students

% of educators agree that Playworks helps students...



Playworks supports recess

% of educators agree that during recess Playworks...



Playworks supports the school

96%

of educators agree that Playworks helps create an engaging learning environment.

98%

of educators agree that Playworks helps create an environment of belonging.

97%

of educators agree Playworks helps create opportunities for inclusion of diverse groups of students.

93%

of educators agree Playworks helps improve the school climate.

2023 - 2024 School Program Highlights

Blue Shirt Recognition

This year, Playworks launched its Blue Shirt Recognition program. Playworks Blue Shirt partners don't just believe play is important, they understand play is foundational to the health, wellness, and culture of their school. They're committed to prioritizing play every day. North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale School District 622 (District 622) was named Playworks' first Blue Shirt District, uplifting their commitment to prioritizing play as a partner of Playworks.



Double Dutch: Reviving Cultural Heritage & Fostering Community

This Spring marked a huge milestone as Playworks, in partnership with four Minneapolis schools—Lucy Laney, Marcy, Nellie Stone, and Ascension—and the Minneapolis Women's Double Dutch Club "Double Dutch is in my DNA," launched a vibrant community-driven pilot program. Our Double Dutch initiative, transcended mere gameplay, and became a transformative journey for these school communities.



2023 - 2024 Corporate Partner Highlights

Corporate Partner of the Year: Allianz Life

During April and May, Allianz team members joined Playworks and scholars at Prodeo Academy for a supercharged recess experience. These play days showcased how play can be a conduit for social emotional learning and developmental growth. Volunteers engaged scholars in a variety of games and supported them in practicing conflict resolution and relationship building skills.



Playworks joins Fastbreak Foundation's Starting Five

In October, the Minnesota Timberwolves and Lynx named Playworks to their newest cohort of Starting Five Grantees. Through this 4-year program, Playworks receives annual financial support and the opportunity to team up with staff, coaches, and players to bring unique and exciting play experiences to the Playworks' partner schools.



2023 - 2024 Partners in Play

Allianz Life
Ampact
Cludo
CorTalent
Ecolab
F.R. Bigelow Foundation
Keystone Group International
Kris Lindahl Real Estate
Laureus Sport for Good Foundation
Minnesota Timberwolves & Lynx
Minnesota Twins
NBC Sports Next
NorthRock
Northside Achievement Zone
Play It Again Sports
Propel Nonprofits
Sauer Family Foundation
St. Paul Saints
The Barcode Group
The Minneapolis Foundation
Twelve Consulting Group
UCare
U.S. Bank
Wayzata Community Church



Thank you to the generosity of our major donors!

Thank you to the 415 individuals who participated in corporate volunteer initiatives!

2023 - 2024 School Partners

Charter Schools

Ascension Catholic School, Minneapolis

Prodeo Academy- Columbia Heights

Minneapolis Public Schools

Lucy Craft Laney Elementary

Marcy School for the Arts, Minneapolis

Nellie Stone Johnson Elementary

Pillsbury Elementary

North St. Paul- Maplewood- Oakdale*

Carver Elementary

Castle Elementary

Cowern Elementary

Eagle Point Elementary

Justice Alan Page Elementary

Richardson Elementary

Weaver Elementary

Northeast Metro 916*

Karner Blue Education Center, Blaine

Pankalo Education Center, Lake Elmo

Saint Paul Public Schools*

Cherokee Heights Elementary, St Paul

*School District Partner

Learn about our
Pro Partners here!



Playworks Minnesota

High Five! Thank you for bringing safe and healthy play to youth across the Twin Cities!



Follow Playworks Minnesota:

