

7 Principles of Inclusive Playground Design®

1 Be Fair

- 1a Opportunities for physical, social-emotional, sensory, cognitive, and communication development are integrated
- 1b Multigenerational play activities, such as musical instruments, offer developmentally meaningful experiences
- 1c The play space was designed to offer learning opportunities and programs to teach children how they can successfully play together

2 Be Included

- 2a Activities offer various types and forms of play, such as dramatic play opportunities
- 2b Physical play components, such as climbers, offer beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels of graduated challenge for healthy risk-taking
- 2c Provides choices in the method of participation in both gross and fine motor activities

3 Be Smart

- 3a Activities that provide behavioral cues and sensory feedback reinforce understanding and expectations
- 3b Intuitive play patterns, such as looping, offer repetitive, active play
- 3c The well-organized play environment intentionally reinforces play and avoids user conflict

4 Be Independent

- 4a Universal signage with visual supports encourages participation and provides directional cues
- 4b Accessible routes of travel and poured-in-place surfacing are used to and within the play environment
- 4c Sensory-rich experiences encourage discovery and exploration
- 4d Universal design features, such as slide transfers, support independence and self-confidence

5 Be Safe

- 5a Age-appropriate play equipment applies safety standards and addresses potential hazards
- 5b Cozy spots offer areas to seek sensory relief, and jump-in points offer places to observe and understand play activities prior to participating
- 5c Seating and supervision areas provide clear visibility of activity areas

6 Be Active

- 6a Accommodations such as high backs and molded seats help children maintain a neutral body position
- 6b Equitable alternatives are found within play experiences, such as upper-body activities
- 6c Balanced play experiences that promote social inclusion through reciprocal interaction encourage cooperation

7 Be Comfortable

- 7a Play activities, like balcony panels, offer comfortable reach and approach for those seated or standing
- 7b Ramps and decks provide adequate space for multiple users and encourage movement and gathering
- 7c Integrated shade and trees offer a balance of environmental conditions
- 7d Amenities and comfortable proximity to the school enhance the user experience

The 7 Principles of Inclusive Playground Design® are tailored by the Center for Outreach, Research and Education from the original 7 Principles of Inclusive Design, created by NC State University's Center for Universal Design.