

# Please note that Glen Elementary practices a West Coast Recess. Help your child be prepared each school day.

## ***Why a West Coast Recess?***

Living in a rain forest offers many diverse weather conditions. It makes sense therefore, that we are well prepared to be outside in the rain. It is important for children to get outside throughout the day for fresh air and exercise. Research has proven time and time again the positive impact that physical activity has on learning. For this reason, like many local schools, Glen Elementary practices a *West Coast Recess*.

## ***Being prepared for the weather:***

We know that if kids are well prepared to be outside in the rain, they actually enjoy it. As long as kids stay dry and warm there is a great deal of fun to be had in all kinds of weather. To be prepared to be outside in the rain it is important for your child to have appropriate clothing such as:

- A rain jacket (not a hoodie or sweater)
- Rubber boots
- Rain pants (optional)
- An umbrella
- A rain hat or coat with a hood
- A change of clothes (including socks and underwear), just in case
- **WE ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO KEEP RAIN WEAR AND CHANGES OF CLOTHES AT SCHOOL**

## ***Commonly Asked Questions:***

### **I am worried that my child will get sick being out in the rain.**

It is not cold weather that makes us sick but rather viruses. People get sick more often in the winter because they are exposed to each other more in the winter than in the summer. When it is cold outside people tend to stay inside and are more likely to spread germs to one another. Getting outdoors is more likely to protect our kids from illnesses than keeping them indoors. ([Does Cold Weather Cause the Cold or Flu?](#)).

### **My child has been sick but is now returning to school. Can he stay inside today?**

No. Firstly, if your child is still not quite better it would be better to keep them at home until they are 100% ready to function fully at school. If s/he is too sick to go outside s/he is also probably too sick to get through the day's work successfully – give your child another day of rest. Secondly, we have very limited supervision inside so if more than a couple of students are requesting this it becomes problematic. We do make exceptions to this based on extenuating circumstances so if you want to chat about your child's specific health conditions please phone me and we can talk about your concerns.

### **Why don't you keep them in – they would be far more comfortable – it doesn't seem fair!**

We are concerned that if we set things up for our kids to avoid inclement weather by staying indoors we are teaching them that they need to protect themselves from it. The habits we set up our kids with as they grow up tend to last into adulthood. Rather than feeling that they need to stay indoors we want to nurture resiliency and resourcefulness by encouraging them to find ways to enjoy the rain. We also are fortunate to have plenty of undercover areas for students to get out of the rain if they wish. Students get very excited when it rains as they are busy constructing canals, dams, and islands and they are happy when the rain arrives to fill them. These types of imaginative play are very healthy learning experiences for our students. Another reason why it is so important that our kids go outside is that it is extremely difficult for most of them to focus on their school work in the afternoons when they have not had the opportunity to get some fresh air. In the past, when we used to keep kids inside more routinely due to rain, our students struggled through their afternoons.

### **Are the children ever allowed to stay inside due to the weather?**

We occasionally have weather conditions that are unsafe or unreasonable to expect students to stay outside in. Such weather includes lightning, heavy hail, and hard, driving rain with extreme cold or wind. In these types of situations, we will declare an inside day however we don't expect to have more than 1 or 2 of them a year, if at all.