



## ***NEOPB Painting Preschool Playgrounds for Movement “Stencil Kits” — Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and Tips from the Field***

**Before starting any painting/stenciling project, it is very important that the childcare center or school site director provides advice on what type and how many stencils to paint. Keep them informed during all phases of the playground design and painting project.**

### ***Paint-related questions:***

#### ***What kind of paint is best?***

- See page 10 of the guide: water-soluble asphalt or curb-marking paint (suggested colors to start with: red, yellow, blue, black, and white). Paint vendors can suggest appropriate paint depending on the playground surface (smooth concrete or rough asphalt). Be sure to ask for recommendations regarding the best cleaning agent for spills (water soluble paints are the easiest to clean up and are therefore highly recommended).
- Spray paint can be used.
- If needed, consult with the school district maintenance staff and/or the city or county staff who maintain and paint traffic signs on roadways and parking lots. Their expertise and input will be very valuable with regarding to purchasing the best type of paint to use as well as how to prepare the painting surface or surfaces.

#### ***Can I use chalk to outline the playground designs and the stencils before using paint?***

- Yes, that would probably be very helpful to ensure that the playground design works for the play area and before applying paint and also serves to keep the stencils clean.
- Chalking out the outline and then using paint leaves straighter lines than painting directly on the stencil.

***What are the recommended ways for applying paint to a playground surface (spray, brush sizes/types, pouring paint from small jar [for stencils with narrow slits?]. Perhaps give tips for each common paint application method.)***

For questions or comments about the Stencil Kits, contact [Melba.Hinojosa@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Melba.Hinojosa@cdph.ca.gov) or [Jeffery.Rosenhall@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Jeffery.Rosenhall@cdph.ca.gov). You may also call the general NEOPB telephone line at (916) 449-5400.

Revised 8-2-16

- Spray painting is not as effective as painting with small size rollers along with 1-inch, 2-inch, and 3-inch wide paint brushes, based on the stencil. The stencils will be easier to maintain by using chalk to outline the design, removing the stencil, and then painting the design using a brush or a roller.
  - Other: small foam paint brushes

### ***Painting tips***

- Use smaller brushes for small detail and angled brushes for painting corners.
- Painting directly on the stencils can lead to smeared edges.
- When painting the outline of a stencil, only a little paint is needed so using the tip of the brush is best.
- Use an inward stroke of the brush to keep the edges neat.
- Use plastic/Styrofoam bowls or yogurt containers for the paint. Using paint trays is unnecessary and lead to the waste of paint.
- Sealant can be used over the paint to make the stenciled projects last longer.

### ***To what degree and how should we best clean the stencil from excess paint build-up?***

- A wet rag (wet with water for the recommended water-soluble paints) should be used to clean the stencils as soon as people are done using the stencils. Using paint thinner may damage the stencils.

### ***What are the minimum/maximum outdoor temperatures for applying paint to outdoor surfaces?***

- Some paint cans specify the minimum and maximum outdoor temperatures for applying paint. You can also ask the paint salesperson at your local hardware or paint retailer.

### ***From past experience (if indeed we have sufficient longevity data), what is the usual range of time that the painted figures will last on cement? On blacktop?)***

- It depends on the surface and use, but we suggest touching up on an annual basis to maintain the brightest coloring, if possible.
- Using sealants over the paint may lead to longevity of the stencils, however, this step is completely optional.

### ***What are your suggestions regarding how we can practice using the stencils before we use them on cement or blacktop?***

- Practice painting on butcher paper (several sheets thick) placed on a piece of wood, cardboard or on firm dirt
- Take careful measurements of the space you have to paint and complete a detailed sketch that is to scale as much as possible.

### ***Storage and transporting the stencils:***

Storage questions:

- To the extent possible, keep the shipping boxes to store the stencils, especially the larger pieces.
- Separate, store, and label the stencils into groupings, such as the alphabet, the numbers 0-9, the shapes, etc.
- Label each stencil piece and indicate if it is part of a set. For example, the Bull's-Eye Toss consists of six pieces so each piece could be labeled "one of six", two of six, three of six, etc.

Transporting:

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- Make certain the borrower knows exactly which stencils they are borrowing; it is highly unlikely that ALL the stencils would be used in a single stenciling project.
- Ensure the borrower knows the dimension of the stencils they are borrowing so they bring an appropriately sized vehicle

**Administrative-related questions:**

***What is the expectation as to how long we can borrow the stencils before returning them?***

- We would suppose one to two weeks to borrow the stencils; the local stencil host will determine the maximum loan time partially based on demand.

***Who can borrow and use the stencils?***

- Any organization or group (e.g., family day care homes, child care centers, preschools, K-6 schools, UC CalFresh, Catholic Charities, local social services, city parks and recreation departments, low-income housing units, Head Start, etc.) that works in child care settings (most appropriate for playgrounds used by 3-5 year olds but can also be implemented in playgrounds used by 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders) can borrow the stencils. Stencil Kits were purchased using CDC Prevention First funding so the use of the stencils is NOT limited and can support physical activity in all areas.

***What if I have questions about how to borrow and use the stencils?***

- Your NEOPB contacts: [Melba.Hinojosa@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Melba.Hinojosa@cdph.ca.gov) or [Jeffery.Rosenhall@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Jeffery.Rosenhall@cdph.ca.gov) . You may also call the general Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Branch (NEOPB) phone number at 916.449.5400.

**Funding-related questions:**

***Can SNAP-Ed funds be used to purchase paint?***

- Yes. The playground paint and supplies necessary for its application (brushes, painter's tape, etc.) are SNAP-Ed allowable expenses as these enable environmental enhancements to support policy, systems, and environmental change activities. Painting playgrounds to promote movement will help to increase physical activity by providing healthy behavioral cues for children, their teachers, and other adult caregivers. All paint and supplies purchased must be reasonable and necessary to complete the identified playground enhancements.

***If the stencils get torn, worn out, or lost, will CDPH replace them?***

- No. The stencils are constructed from corrugated plastic, much like cardboard, but are lighter and reusable. CDPH made a one-time materials distribution and there is no replacement for lost or damaged stencils by the State of California.

***Want to purchase additional stencils?***

- See the guide for a list of possible vendors.

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