

Larimer County 4-H



LARIMER COUNTY
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Club Activities

I Remember- We Remember

Concept:

Why do we advocate working together? What can a group of people accomplish that a single person working alone couldn't do just as well? What does the statement "Two heads are better than one" really mean? Working together is not just a phrase that makes people feel better. By combining our efforts we really can accomplish more than we can individually. There is a certain synergy that comes from combining our talents. The brainstorming of ideas is more efficient when more than one brain is involved. People bring different talents to the table and can use those talents as part of a group to better solve problems or create solutions.

Time Estimate:

20 minutes plus discussion time

Materials Needed:

- A pen or pencil for each person
- A piece of paper for each person
- 6 teacher- created list of words
- A watch with a second hand

Activity:

You will need to prepare six lists of words before starting the activity. The first two lists should have fifteen words on them. The next two lists should have twenty words on them and the last two lists should have thirty words on them. You may write the lists on overhead transparencies or large sheets of paper. You will use the lists one at a time, so they must be on separate sheets with a way to cover up and uncover the words. You can utilize random words or you can use words that are part of lessons that you have been studying. To begin the activity, give each person a piece of paper and a writing utensil. Explain that you are going to show them a list of words. They will have thirty seconds to study the list. They may not do any writing during the study time. After the thirty-second study time, the object will be for them to write down as many words as they can remember from the list. You can adjust the times to meet the ability level of your group. Now uncover one of the lists of fifteen words for thirty seconds. Let them study the list. After covering the list back up, give them thirty to forty-five seconds to write what they remember. After the writing period, uncover the list again and have them count how many words they got correct. For every word that is correct, they get one thousand points. Share the results with the entire group. Repeat the process a second time with a new list

of fifteen words. For the next round have them get with a partner. Repeat the process twice, using the list of twenty words. They will use one piece of paper between the two of them and only one person may write down words. For the last round have them get in groups of four. Repeat the process using the lists of thirty

Discussion Ideas:

“What” Questions

- How many words were you able to remember when you worked alone?
- How many words were you able to remember when you were working with a partner?
- How many words were you able to remember when you worked in a group?
- What techniques did you use when you worked alone to help you remember?
- What techniques did you use when you worked with others to help you remember?

“So What” Questions

- How does this activity show that working together helps to increase what we can do?
- What made your scores go up as other people helped create the list?
- What does the phrase “Two heads are better than one” mean?
- How can people from different backgrounds help us to solve problems?

“Now What” Questions

- How can working together improve our results?
- What can we do if we want to complete a job faster or better?

Storyteller

Concept:

Individual effort is appreciated, but working with others is critical in today's world. We work in teams, groups and committees all of our lives. Very few of us will work or live in a situation where we have the final say on everything. How well we are able to take the ideas of others and blend them with our own ideas will determine the success we have when working with other people. One skill that helps when being asked to work with others is creativity. Many times the solution to opposing opinions or ideas is a creative combination of those opinions. Compromise consists of taking a number of different solutions to an issue or problem and blending them together. In the area of conflict resolution, you may use this activity to point out that people don't always control the situations they find themselves in. Just as the story comes to them already heading in a certain direction, life too comes at them with certain circumstances already in place. They have to deal with the story and with life as it comes. The expression "When life hands you a lemon, make lemonade" can be used to point out that although you can't always control the circumstances in your life, you can control how you react to those circumstances. The issue of compromise in conflict resolution may also be addressed.

Time Estimate: 15 minutes plus discussion time

Materials Needed:

- 20 small pieces of paper (about 2 inches by 3 inches) per team of five people with a couple of extra pieces of paper for mistakes
- A pen or pencil for each person

Activity:

Divide into groups of five. Give each group two small pieces of paper and a writing utensil to each person. Ask each person to write one word on each of the pieces of paper that they were given. The words they choose must be nouns (a person, place or thing). Examples of this would be Abraham Lincoln, Michael Jordan, Hawaii, Alaska, ping-pong table, canoe, etc. They are to write a different word on each piece of paper. Ask them to write clearly so that others will be able to read what they have written. Tell them not to show the word they wrote to anyone else. When completed, each group will have ten pieces of paper with ten different words. (Don't worry if by coincidence two people wrote the same word.) When they have finished writing, place the papers randomly face down on a table or the floor in the

middle of the group. Explain that this is going to be a storytelling activity. To begin, have one person select one of the pieces of paper. After they have selected, have the person on their left select a piece of paper. The first person that chose a piece of paper will start telling a make believe story out-loud. As they tell their story, they must at some point use the word they have drawn in the story. Even after they have used their word they must continue to tell the story until you call out that it is time to change. When you have indicated that it is time to change, the person on their left immediately picks up the story where they left off and continues it. Remind them that as they continue the story it must make sense. As with the first person, they must at some point use the word that they drew. As each person begins their turn, have the next person draw a word so they will be ready to go as soon as the story gets to them. As each person finishes their turn, they must put the word back in the middle face up to ensure they have in fact used it. Continue in this fashion until all of the words are drawn. Remind the last person that they must draw the story to a conclusion. Repeat the activity starting over with a new set of words.

Discussion Ideas:

“What” Questions

- How hard was it to think up words to write on the piece of paper?
- How hard was it to use the word you drew in the story?
- Did the story make sense?
- How did you feel when your turn was next?
- If right before your turn the story started to go a direction you hadn't planned on, what did you do when it was your turn?

“So What” Questions

- How hard was it to pick up where someone else stopped in the story?
- Was the activity easier the second time around? Why or why not?
- Would it have been easier if you could have done the whole story by yourself?
- What part does cooperation play in this activity?
- Is it always easy to cooperate? Explain.
- Why is cooperation important?
- What are some careers that require a great deal of cooperation among its workers?
- How can creativity help us solve problems?
- Does creativity help us cooperate with one another?
- How does compromise help us to work together?
- What role does compromise play in resolving a conflict?
- Does someone have to be the winner and someone the loser when we compromise? Why?

“Now What” Questions

- How does a person act when they are not being cooperative?
- When they are being cooperative?
- When there is more than one opinion about how to solve a conflict, how can we use cooperation, creativity and compromise to come to an agreement?

Marble Tunnel

Concept: The old way of doing business was an individual achievement. The new mantra of the workplace is teaming. Working together as a team to solve a problem is a common scenario in today's workplace. It involves not only critical thinking to decide what has to be accomplished to solve the problem, but also moving past the thinking stage to see if your solution is practical and workable. Sometimes one person has the solution and explains to the group what to do, and other times the solution is arrived at with the input of many minds. No matter how good a solution sounds, the real test is done it work. If successful, great! If not, then back to the drawing board to try it again.

Time Estimate: 10 minutes plus discussion time

Materials Needed:

- 1 standard sized marble per team of eight
- 1 grocery bag per team of eight
- 1 piece of paper (8 1/2 x 11) per participant
- Masking tape
- A watch with a second hand

Activity:

Give each participant a piece of paper and about three inches of masking tape. Have them roll the paper into a long tube. The paper should be rolled so that the tube is 11 inches in length. The tube should be about one and a half inches in diameter. This diameter will allow a marble to pass easily through it. Use the tape to keep the tube rolled up. If there are any loose ends of the paper inside either end of the tube that would stop the marble from rolling through, tape those down also. Divide your group into teams of eight. Mark off a starting line and a finishing line. The lines should be about twenty feet apart. Place a grocery bag for each team at the finish line. Have the teams line up single file with the first person standing at the starting line and the other team members standing shoulder to shoulder heading towards the finish line, even though they won't extend all the way to the finish line. Explain that their challenge will be to move the marble from the starting line to the finish line and have it end up in the grocery bag. The marble must be moved by rolling it through the tubes. This will require the team members to keep moving to the end of the line as the marble rolls from tube to tube. After the marble has passed

through the first person's tube, they will have to quickly reposition themselves down to the end of the line to allow the marble to keep moving towards the finish line. No one may not touch the marble with their hands, any other part of their body or by any means other than the paper tubes. If the marble is touched or hits the ground, the team must go back to the starting line and start over again. If the time that you have allotted for the activity is running out, you may add penalty seconds instead of having them start over. This is a timed event. Read out each team's time as they finish and at the conclusion have each team report their time to the group. Repeat the activity a second time to allow for improvement.

Discussion Ideas:

“What” Questions

- How long did your team take in the first round? The second round?
- What method did you use to move the marble?
- What did you do differently in the second round? Was it successful?

“So What” Questions

- How did your team decide what to do?
- Was everyone on the team involved in solving the challenge? Why or why not?
- How did your group work well together?
- What happens when a group does not work well together?
- How can an individual hurt a team effort?
- What does the team need to do when their first effort is not successful?
- Is it a sign of failure when you try something and it doesn't work?
- How can we learn from our failures? Our successes?

“Now What” Questions

- How does working together help to solve problems?
- What can an individual do to contribute to the success of a team?

Bull's-Eye

Concept: Clear communication is the foundation of our society. This is true whether we are talking about a relationship between two people or when working on a group project. Vague comments such as, “Good job!” are not helpful feedback. To really be helpful, a comment should be specific such as, “That was a great idea to use the computer to send those letters out so quickly!” Both statements could make the person feel better, but the second statement gives them specific feedback that can help them evaluate what to do in future situations. Being specific is not always easy, but the benefits in improved future behavior certainly outweigh the effort.

One place I have found this activity to be extremely useful is when teaching “I statements” or “I messages”. A number of curriculum use this technique to help kids express their feelings in a positive manner. This activity can be used to reinforce the point that when making an “I statement or message” you need to be specific.

Time Estimate: 15 minutes plus discussion time

Materials Needed:

- 4 pieces of 8½ by 11 inch paper per team of 4 or 5 people
- 1 large paper grocery bag or bucket per team
- Masking tape

Activity:

Divide your group into teams of four to five people. Give each team a paper sack and four pieces of paper. Place a piece of masking tape down on the floor to make the starting line. Set the bag up about six feet away from the starting line. Have the teams line up single file behind the starting line. Give the first person in each line the four pieces of paper. Have them crumple the papers so they make four balls. The last person in each line goes out to stand by the paper bag and be the helper. This person serves as the instruction giver, retriever and, if necessary, to hold the bag open. They may not physically assist the thrower. The first person turns backwards so they are facing away from the paper bag. They must now toss the four pieces of paper over their shoulder, one at a time, trying to get them to land in the bag. They may not turn around nor talk once they begin their set of four throws. The helper who is standing by the paper bag will be their eyes. After each throw the

helper will describe where the paper ball landed and how to change the thrower's aim for the next throw. No one else on the team may give suggestions or help to the

thrower. After the thrower takes their four tosses they take the place of the helper. The helper retrieves the paper balls, takes them back to the team and goes to the end of the line. The second person in line rotates up and now becomes the thrower. Go through the entire line one time. The team receives ten points for each paper ball that makes it into the bag.

Discussion Ideas:

“What Questions”

- How many pieces of paper did your team get into the bag?
- How hard was it for you to get them into the bag?
- What made giving instructions difficult?
- What technique for throwing did you find worked best?
- What technique for giving instructions did you find worked best?
- If you were to try this again, what would you do differently?

“So What” Questions

- What can this activity tell us about communication?
- How specific were the instructions that the helper gave to you?
- What would have happened if your helper just said “Nice job, but try a little harder.”
- Were the instructions clear enough that they were helpful?
- How could the instructions have been more helpful?
- Did you learn from your helper how to give good (or bad) instructions?
- Why is communication important when working with a group?
- How does communication affect how much a group can achieve?

“Now What” Questions

- What do we have to do to communicate clearly?
- How does being specific help us to communicate better?
- How does specific feedback help us to work together?

Stress Circle

Concept: Everyone has stress. Problems, deadlines, expectations of others, everyday demands, etc. all create stress in our lives. However, if it wasn't for stress we wouldn't get anything done. To some degree, stress motivates us to accomplish a variety of tasks. Stress, in and of itself, is not a bad thing. Stress creates problems for people when the expectations and demands of the day are greater than our ability to deal with them. This activity will give the participants a chance to experience different levels of stress.

Time Estimate: 15 minutes plus discussion time

Materials Needed:

- An object for each group ten people (the object will need to be small enough it can be passed around a circle from person to person such as a tennis ball or a small balloon)
- A list of categories

Activity:

Divide into groups of about ten. Have each group stand in a circle or sit in a circle either in chairs or on the floor. Give each group a small object. Explain that you will be giving out a category such as vegetables or baseball teams and you will tell them how many items from that category they must list. You will be the one that decides how many items from the category they have to list. As soon as the category and number of items has been given, the person who has the object will start to pass it around the circle to the right. They must then begin listing a certain number of answers from the category that you gave them. They must give the correct number of answers before the object goes around the circle and returns to them. Only the person who starts the object may talk. If your group is made up of less than ten people and you feel the person answering needs more time, have the object go around the circle twice. If you have more than one group, you will have to appoint a judge for each group since the action will go too fast for you to hear each group. Rotate the judges in and out of the groups each round.

For the first couple of rounds, make the categories easy and the number of answers required short. For example, "Name three sports that are played with a ball", "Name four different kinds of cars", "Name four toppings that you can put on a pizza". Then increase the difficulty and the number of items that must be named. You want the activity to get progressively harder to simulate an increase in stress levels. By the end, the lists should be very difficult to complete, if not impossible. Choose your categories based upon the ability level and age of your group. Adjust the number of answers required in each round according to how many people are in the circle. If time allows, have each person be the one that has to give the answers more than once so everyone has an opportunity to have an easier and more difficult list. If you would like to create even more stress in the second round, have the person giving the answers stand in the middle of the circle while answering.

Sample Categories:

- Use categories that relate to subjects that you are studying
- Sports played with a ball
- Toppings put on a pizza
- Different kinds of cars
- Different kinds of balls used in sports
- Comic book heroes
- Television shows
- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Animals with four legs
- Song titles
- Book titles
- Movie titles
- Presidents
- States
- Rivers
- Sports figures
- Music personalities
- Words that start with the letter “s”
- Foods you eat with your hands

Discussion Ideas:

“What” Questions

- How often did your group succeed?
- How easy was it to think up the correct responses?
- What category did you think was easy? Hard?
- What new category would you suggest?

“So What” Questions

- What made this activity stressful?
- Who was the person under the most stress?
- How can this activity be compared to stress in our lives?
- What are some things that create stress in our lives?
- What are the body’s physical signs of stress?
- What behaviors do we exhibit when we are under too much stress?
- Does everyone react to stress the same way?
- Are the same things stressful to everyone? Why or why not?

“Now What” Questions

- What are some of the ways we can make sure we don’t get too stressed out?
- What are some of the negative behaviors people use to reduce stress?
- What are some of the positive techniques we use to get through a stressful situation?
- How can we help others when they become stressed out?

My Turn?

Concept:

When you get right down to it, goal setting is really a problem-solving activity. You want to get something that you don't have. This could be something material such as a car or it may be more behavioral such as losing weight. The "what" will vary from person to person and for that matter even from year to year as we age and our lives keep changing. However, your goals may change but the process for reaching them remains the same. You need to have a plan. You can't expect to move towards your goal unless you create a list of steps that will allow you to move in the appropriate direction. This aspect of goal setting involves problem-solving. It is the creation of a workable plan that stops many of our young people from reaching their goals. Instead of coming to fruition their goals simply remain dreams or wishes. By creating a plan and then communicating the plan to others, your students will have a much more realistic chance of achieving their goals.

Time Estimate:

10 minutes plus discussion time

Materials Needed:

- Each participant must be sitting in a chair or at a desk
- A watch with a second hand

Activity:

Divide into groups of ten to fifteen. Form a circle with each member of the group sitting in a chair. Have everyone close their eyes and keep them closed while you explain the activity. Tell them that their challenge is to count to the number (15 or 20). They will do this as a group. Each person will stand up (rising at least six inches off their chair) and call out a number. The numbers must be called out in consecutive order. The group may not pre-arrange who is going to say which numbers. There is no talking other than the calling out of numbers allowed. The choice of who is going to call out the next number must be completely at random. If you see anyone pointing or talking, then call them on it and have the group start again. Caution them that they may not go around the circle in order. Each time any two people begin to stand at the same time or say a number at the same time, the entire group must begin all over again. They can't repeat the same order of people when starting over. Every person in the group must say at least one number. If you only have one group, then you be the judge. If you have two or more groups, you will need to rotate the position of judge among the participants. Be very strict about the rules. They will probably have to start over a number of times before they finally met the challenge. After about ten tries, tell them that they have only two more changes to complete the challenge. If by some miracle they complete this

challenge on the first try, tell them that you want them to do it again without using the same order, but try to get it done in a shorter period of time. Now explain that in the second round you are going to let them discuss strategies before they try it again. They still can't go around the circle in order. Give them about ninety seconds to discuss strategy. After they have decided upon a strategy, time how long it takes them to complete the challenge. If they want to try two different strategies to see which one is faster, let them. Now in round three, they are going to use the simplest strategy. They will just go around the circle and have each person count off. They must still rise slightly from their chair when they say their number. Time them a couple of times to see if they can break their own record.

Discussion Ideas:

“What” Questions

- How many tries did it take us to get it right in the first round?
- Did the same people always try to go early in the challenge?
- What was your strategy as to when you would stand up during the first round of the challenge?
- What was our final record time?
- What could we do different to make our time even faster?

“So what” Questions

- What made round one so difficult?
- What made round two easier?
- Why was round three the fastest round? • What can we learn about communication from this activity?
- What can we learn about the importance of having a plan from this activity?
- What type of plan usually works better a complicated one or an easy to understand one? Why?
- How does working together help when trying to solve a problem?
- Why do you need a plan to reach your goals?

“Now What” Questions

- How can working together help us solve a problem?
- How does having a plan help you reach your goals?
- How can you use communication to help reach your goals?

Group Benefits

Concept:

No one individual knows everything. Some people might think and act like they do, but in reality everyone is experienced in different areas due to their background, heritage, interests and abilities. When we look at a community we will see a melting of those experiences reflected in the values of that community. Individuals influence those groups to which they belong and then those groups influence the communities as a whole. Each group may add something different. Without each group's contribution, communities and the workplace would lose the richness that comes with diversity. Working together to produce a thriving community, profitable product or a successful concept happens when we accept not just the contributions of one or many people. A group can improve their work through the use of synergy, while an individual must use more energy to get the same result.

Time Estimate:

12 minutes plus discussion time

Materials Needed:

- A pen or pencil for each team of four
- A piece of paper for each team of four
- A watch with a second hand

Activity:

Divide your group into teams of four and have them sit in a circle. Give each team a writing utensil and a piece of paper. Explain that you are going to give them a challenge. They will have sixty seconds to complete the challenge. The challenge will consist of trying to create the longest list of answers possible from the categories that you will give them. As each team creates their list, the paper they are using to write down their answers will be passed around the circle with each person adding one answer to the list when it is their turn. A team may not have any duplicate answers. There is no talking as the paper is passed around the circle. If one person cannot think of an answer, they must write the word skip each time it comes to them. Remember there is no talking during the sixty seconds. When the time has expired, have each group report out their total number of answers, skips do not count. Then have each team read their list. Repeat this three times using a different category for each round. Since the first person to write will have the easiest time, have each round begin with a different person. For rounds four and five, use the same process except that the group may talk during the sixty seconds. They may brainstorm and suggest answers to whomever has the piece of paper at the moment. Remember that the paper must still be passed from person to person with each individual writing down an answer before it is passed to the next person. The "skip" rule may still be used but with the group helping no one will likely have a need for it.

Suggestions for Categories:

- Animals with four legs
- Major league baseball teams
- Breakfast cereals
- Television shows
- Countries from around the world
- States in America
- Sports
- Colors
- Foods served at fast food restaurants
- Musical instruments

Discussion Ideas:**“What” Questions**

- How many answers did your team get in each of rounds one, two and three?
- How many answers did your team get in each of rounds four and five?
- How did these numbers compare to the other groups?
- What category did you find the easiest? The hardest?
- If you could choose a category that wasn't listed, what would it be?

“So What” Questions

- What can this activity tell us about working together?
- Did one person on your team always contribute the most?
- If your team only had two people, how well would your team have done?
- Why was your team able to create a longer list when you were allowed to talk?
- Why can't one person know everything?
- What role does a person's interests play in what they know?
- How does a person's background influence how they live?
- Does having people with various experiences help a community thrive?
- How does working together help make a problem easier to solve?

“Now What” Questions

- How can people from different backgrounds help make a community a better place to live?
- How can people from different backgrounds help solve a problem?

Pass Right- Pass Left

Concept:

Certain skills for good communication are certainly more important than others. One of the most important of these is the skill of listening. This activity will show the importance of listening and how difficult that is when you are not concentrating on what is being said because you're busy doing something else.

Time Estimate:

10 minutes plus discussion time

Materials Needed:

- The Wright Family Story
- One button or some other small item for each person in the group

Activity:

Have your entire group form a circle. The best format is to have them seated on the floor sitting "Indian" style. If this will not work with your group, you can have them in chairs or even standing in a circle. Give each person in the circle a penny or some other small item that can be passed easily from hand to hand. Tell the group that you are going to read them a story and every time they hear a word that sounds like right or left, they are to pass the button in their hand to the person on their right or left depending on what they heard. Start reading the story slowly so that they have a chance to catch on to what you want them to do. After a few passes stop the story and ask them how they are doing. Check to see that everyone has a button in his hand. If your group is typical, some will have two or three buttons and others will not have any. Have them redistribute the buttons so that everyone has one again. Now continue to read the story, getting faster as you go. Stop the story a couple more times to check on how they are doing.

Discussion Ideas:

- What was happening during this activity?
- What made the activity difficult to accomplish?
- What impact did what other people do have on your ability to stay up with the story?
- What would have made the activity easier to accomplish?
- How hard was it to listen and pass the objects at the same time?
- How much of the story can you remember?
- What can this activity tell us about communication?
- How hard were you concentrating on either side of you?
- How does this level of concentration compare with what you do when someone is talking to you?
- Describe a situation you have had where someone was not really listening to you when you were telling them something.
- How did that make you feel?

From: "Activities That Teach" by Tom Jackson

Life With the Wright Family

One day the Wright family decided to take a vacation. The first thing they had to decide was who would be left at home since there was not enough room in the Wright family car for all of them. Mr. Wright decided that Aunt Linda Wright would be the one left at home. Of course this made Aunt Linda Wright so mad that she left the house immediately yelling “It will be a right cold day before I return”.

The Wright family now bundled up the children, Tommy Wright, Susan Wright, Timmy Wright, and Shelly Wright and got in the car and left. Unfortunately, as they turned out of the driveway someone had left a trash can in the street so they had to turn right around and stop the car. They told Tommy Wright to get out of the car and move the trash can so they could get going. Tommy took so long that they almost left him in the street. Once the Wright family got on the road, Mother Wright wondered if she had left the stove on. Father Wright told her not to worry as he had checked the stove and she had not left it on. As they turned right at the corner, everyone started to think about other things they they might have left undone.

No need to worry now, they were off on a right fine vacation. When they arrived at the gas station, Father Wright put gas in the car and then discovered that he had left his wallet at home. So Timmy Wright ran home to get the money that was left behind. After Timmy had left, Susan Wright started to feel sick. She left the car saying that she had to throw up. This of course got Mother Wright’s attention and she left the car in a hurry. Shelly Wright wanted to watch Susan get sick, so she left the car too. Father Wright was left with Tommy Wright who was playing a game in the backseat.

With all of this going on Father Wright decided that this was not the right time to take a vacation, so he gathered up all the family and left the gas station as quickly as he could. When he arrived home, he turned left into the driveway and said “I wish the Wright family had never left the house today!”

Awesome Lap Sit

Concept: As we talk with each other we need to remember that we must not only worry about what we are going to say, but also concentrate on what the other person is saying. If we just talk then we are not really communicating, we are just telling. This exercise shows the importance of concerning ourselves with what the other person is doing and finding out that by doing this, we are also taking care of ourselves.

Time Estimate: 15 minutes plus discussion time

Materials Needed: None

Activity: Have your group stand in a circle. Have them all turn to the right and take small steps in towards the center until they are real close to the person in front of them and the person behind them. If the circle has become an egg shape then you need to move people around until you have a perfect circle. Have them put their hands on the waist of the person in front of them. Stress safety before you do this activity. Be sure that everyone is working together and takes responsibility for their own actions. Now on the count of three have each person slowly sit down. Each person should concentrate on helping the person in front of them down onto their lap. Notice I did not say to worry about the lap you are going to be sitting on. This responsibility belongs to the person behind you. You worry about the person who is going to sit on your lap. If everyone sits down together and everyone helps guide each other onto their lap, an amazing thing happens. No one falls down and the circle is complete. If someone is not properly positioned right in front of someone else, then you may have had a collapse in one section. If the activity did not work, then restructure it and try again. The key to this activity is that everyone must take care of each other. It doesn't matter how heavy the person is that sits on you or how little the person is that you sit on. As long as everyone works together the weight is evenly distributed and no one will be squished or fall over. If you really want to challenge your group there are a couple of more activities for them to try. After they have successfully sat down, have them raise their hands in the air and give themselves a round of applause. This proves that the circle is really sturdy. Going even further, have them try to walk around the circle. Get everyone to move their outside foot at the same time, then the inside foot and for the really brave continue in this fashion in a circular pattern.

Discussion Ideas:

- What were you thinking as I first explained the activity?
- Did you have any trouble concentrating on the person who was going to sit on your lap?
- Were you too worried about where you were going to sit?
- How did the activity go the first time we tried it?
- How did you feel when I asked you to raise your hands and clap?
- How did you feel when I asked you to try walking?
- What corrections did we have to make before it worked?
- What would have happened if everyone did not work together?
- How does this activity show working together?
- In what areas of our lives do we do better when we work together?
- Have you ever had a situation where one person was not helping the group?
- What happened in this situation? What was the outcome? Were feelings hurt?

Stop The Music

Equipment:

Chairs (1 less than the number in the group), music

Challenge:

Set up the meeting room in your favorite style with extra space around each chair. Set the room with enough chairs for everyone less one. Have participants walk around the room while you play up-beat music. After some time, stop the music. Participants should now all scramble for chairs. The lucky person left standing moves to the side and takes a chair with him. Continue playing until there is only one person left.

Refreshment:

Lemonade

The Star

Equipment: 40 - 50 foot rope tied to itself forming a large circle

Challenge:

The whole group maintains contact with the rope while creating a five pointed star (the kind that crisscrosses in the middle) with the circle of rope.

Everyone must participate by holding onto the rope. They cannot let go of the rope or trade places with the people next to them to accomplish the task. (They can slide along the rope. Don't mention this unless you need too and the group is getting frustrated.) Once the group thinks that the task is complete, ask them to slowly lower the star to the ground and step back to admire their work.

Refreshment: Cookies

Balloon Bounce

Equipment:

Round Balloons, music

Challenge:

Divide the larger group into smaller groups of 4 or 5. Give each person in the smaller group a different color balloon and ask them to blow it up full but where it won't burst. Object is to bounce the balloons in the air as long as the music plays without letting any of them touch the ground. Participants may only tap their balloon once before another member taps it. (They cannot touch their balloon twice in a row.) Can play as a larger group without the balloon touch rule.

Refreshment:

Popcorn

GOT IT

Equipment: Stick on name tags, writing utensil, sheet of paper

Challenge:

Individuals write their nickname on the name tag. If they do not have a nickname, they are to make something up that they may like to be called. Do not show anyone the name tag. Form a circle and have each person stick the name tag on their own back. Within a fun amount of time, the object is to list as many names on the paper as you can while not letting others get your name on their list. When time is called, find out how many names each person got on their list.

Could do this several times by listing nicknames, dog's names, grandparents name, etc. If the meeting room is large, play area may have to be designated.

Refreshment: Pretzel Sticks

Plumber's Challenge

Equipment:

2 toilet plungers per group, 1 medium size rubber ball per group, 1 9 to 11 inch balloon per group

Challenge:

Form two groups from the membership for the relay. Distribute to each team 2 plungers and 1 ball or 1 balloon. Object is to pass the ball/balloon up and down the team using the plunger without handling the ball/balloon with hands.

Refreshment:

Grapes

Balloon Burst

Equipment:

Balloons, string/yarn (cut into yard lengths)

Challenge:

Distribute to each participant a balloon and a piece of string. Participants should fully blow up their balloon and tie it to the string and then tie the string around their ankle leaving some length of string so that the balloon trails behind them as they move. Participants gather in the play area and on “go” begin trying to pop everyone’s balloon while trying to keep theirs from being popped. The last person with an unpopped balloon wins.

Refreshment:

Ice cream/soda floats

Magic Carpet

Equipment:

Single piece of tarp, plastic cloth, or sheet. Other options include a plastic shower curtain, plastic tablecloth or blanket. For groups of 8 to 12 participants, the “magic carpet” should be approximately 4 feet by 5 feet.

Challenge:

The group is on a magic carpet ride high above the country when someone realizes that the group is going the wrong direction. Then you notice that the carpet is upside-down. Since you are no longer touching the ground, you must turn the carpet over without stepping off the carpet.

In order to limit the risk in this activity, request that all participants must maintain contact with the carpet at all times. This eliminates the option of carrying participants on shoulders and other balance related concerns.

Refreshment: Apple Slices

Community Juggle

Equipment:

A variety of soft, colorful, diverse objects that can be tossed without hurting anyone. Useful objects include tennis balls, ping pong balls, bean bags, plastic fruit, flying disks, pieces of upholstery foam, stuffed animals, inflatable pool toys, rolled-up socks, pillows, and balloons.

Challenge:

To pass an increasing number of objects between group members using a somewhat random but established pattern. Members must always call the person's name while passing the object to their person. Follow the same pattern until all of the objects have been passed. Complete the task as quickly as possible.

Refreshment:

Ants on a log- (Celery with peanut butter and raisins)

Ship Ahoy!

Number of Players:

5 to 50+

Safety Instructions:

Remind players to look after one another when they have to run in a certain direction to avoid running into someone going the wrong direction. For commands where physical contact is required, make sure the group is comfortable with doing this, or find a way that is acceptable (instead of holding hands in “shipwreck,” for instance, players can take hold of a sleeve with their hands.)

Age Level:

For any age. For younger players, start with few commands and add new commands as the group feels comfortable.

Equipment Needed:

None necessary, Makers of some kind to designate forward, aft, and slides of the ship outside are useful, but can be improvised.

Description of Game:

One player of designated the caller for the rest of the players. A “ship” is defined with boundary markers; this could also be the walls of a room, if played indoors. The caller give different instructions to the players and the group must respond quickly. If a player is slow or gives the wrong response and is seen by the caller, that player changes places with the caller. Also, for certain calls players will need to run to one place or another on the “ship.” If the caller can catch someone before that person gets to his destination, the person caught becomes the new caller.

The caller can make these commands:

- “Ship Ahoy!” Where all the players put both hands up over their eyebrows as if to shade their eyes from the sun.
- ‘Scrub the decks!’ means everyone must get on hands and knees and pretend to scrub the floor/ground.
- “Captains coming!” causes players to stand up straight at attention and give a right-handed salute.
-

- “Forward” means all players must go to the place identified as the front of the ship.
- “Aft” means everyone goes to the back of the ship.
- “Port” means all players go the left side of the ship
- “Starboard” means all go to the right side of the ship

Later, as players learn these commands, others can be added:

- “Man overboard” means everyone pretends to throw a life preserver to the person who when overboard.
- “Shipwreck” causes everyone to gather in groups of three, with one person in the middle and the other two holding hands around him to form a lifeboat

As players become familiar with these commands, they can make up additional commands. If they can stand any more, that it.

Base Tag

Number of Players:

10 to 50+

Safety Instructions:

As with any fast moving game, there is always a danger of collisions, especially when the game is played in a confined space. Remind players to be alert so they can avoid crashes.

Equipment Needed:

A base for every 3 players and a ball for every 5.

Description of Game:

Spread bases throughout the desired play area, with approximately one base for every three players. Have a player with a foam ball (an “it”) for every five players. If you are not IT and are hit with a ball, you become IT and take the ball to hit someone else who is not IT.

If you are on a base, you are safe and cannot be hit (and if you are hit, you are still not IT). However, if someone comes up and wants the base, you must move and cannot immediately return to the same base. (The person wanting the base can say something to let the person on the base know that they must go such as “Go” or “Bye-bye.”) Remember, when someone is running and they need a base, they have no friends, so be prepared to move.

Everybody's It

Number of Players:

5-50+

When to Play the Game:

A great game to start with, or for any time. Great for a group needing movement, and a good preliminary trust activity because it involves minimal non threatening touching.

Safety Instructions:

As with most active games, when players are moving about quickly, there's danger of collisions. Remind player to be aware of where they are running to avoid crashes. If that doesn't work, try a fast walk (one foot must be down before the other is up) or some other way of moving.

Equipment Needed:

Boundary markers such as cones, poly spots, Frisbees or other such indicators are useful. Using existing boundaries such as trees, sidewalks and bushes also works.

Description of Game:

Whoever heard of a tag game where everyone was it? I did, for one, As unlikely as it sounds, it is easy to involve all players in this easy-to-do game.

Yes, this IS a tag game (the one is IT attempts to tag someone else to make him or her IT) where everybody is IT, and can tag everyone else, However, once a person is tagged, she or he must freeze until the end of the game, which in fact comes quickly. However, if someone who is not frozen come too near a frozen person the one who is frozen can temporarily unfreeze an arm (and only an arm!) To reach out to tag and freeze the runner, before going back to being frozen. The game goes until everyone is frozen or just one is left.

A variation of this is "Hospital Tag." In this game, you keep running the first and second times you are tagged, but you must hold the place you were tagged in both instances. The third time you are tagged, you are frozen, like for the above game, and once again you can temporarily unfreeze an arm to tag others who come too close.

Another variation for Clover Kids (5-8 years olds) is when you get tagged, you are frozen, and when you are tagged again by anyone, you are unfrozen, so the game can keep on going till everyone is tired.