

Wacky Olympics

Begin your event with a potluck barbecue. Have someone run in with a torch to light the grill! After eating, let the games begin. Then, with great pomp and circumstance, give ribbons to everyone at the end of the day.

WATER GAMES

Water Balloon Relays

- *Balance balloons on tennis rackets, and race to a turn-around line and back.
- *Have each team member race with a water balloon between his or her knees.
- *Form pairs. Place a water balloon between partners' waists, and challenge them to make their way to a line and back without breaking their balloon.
- *Each team has an empty 16-ounce bottle, a large sponge, and a bucket of water. Each player races 10 yards to the bottle and squeezes water from the sponge into the bottle. Players return to the line and repeat until their team's bottle is filled.

Squirt Bottle Games

Use empty dish detergent bottles for these games:

- *Squirt and Fill-Form two teams. Each team stands in a semi-circle and chooses one person to be "It." It holds a small plastic bowl. Everyone else gets a squirt bottle filled with water. On "go," each team squirts water into its bowl. The team with the fullest bowl wins.
- *Water balloon Volleyball - Use a regular volleyball net or tie a rope across an open area. Each side needs an old bed sheet – all members of your team hold onto the sheet. Use the sheet to catch the "volleyball" aka water balloon. Need to have a trash can full of water balloons ready. One team serves and play until someone doesn't catch the balloon. Then other team "serves".

TEAM GAMES

- *Wacky Volleyball-Use a regular volleyball net or tie a rope across an open area. Swish a trash bag in the air to fill it with air, then close it quickly and tie it with a twist-tie. Use the bag as a volleyball until it deflates, then refill.
- *Centipede Obstacle Course-Teams line up, and players place their hands on the waist of the person in front of them. The centipede maneuvers through these obstacles: walk along a 2x4 beam, step over a low fence, and duck under a limbo rod.

DECATHLON FOR FUN

Add these 10 wacky olympic events to your Summer Olympics:

Throwing Contests

Measure the distance that contestants throw:

- *Colored or labeled pingpong balls-two throws per person.
- *Straws-two throws per person.
- *Paper plates-two throws per person.

Contestants race 10 yards, pick up a squirt gun, and extinguish a candle placed on a table 5 feet away.

- *Contestants race under tables and back.

Relays

- *Team members place their shoes in a pile. Then one at a time each teammate races to the shoes, puts his or her shoes on, and returns to the team.

Let Me Introduce You

Formation: Scattered

Equipment: None

Time: 10-15 minutes

Instruct your group to begin shaking hands with as many people as they can. Stop and face a partner....be sure everyone has a partner. Shake hands with this partner and introduce yourself to your partner with your name and then tell them your FULL name (example "Hi I am Beth and my full name is Mary Beth Bannerman Gunn). Now you point at this partner and say out loud "Partner #1 name – full name". Leave this partner and shake hands with 10 people - stop. Repeat the shaking hands and first name but this time add if you have a nickname. While still with this partner (Partner #2 name – nickname) without moving from your spot point out your Partner #1 and say to Partner #2 "That is my partner #1 and her full name is Mary Beth Bannerman Gunn". Point at this partner and say "Partner #2 - name and nickname). Leave this partner and shake 22 hands (just pick a number that works with your group). Stop and face Partner #3. Introduce yourself to this partner sharing name and a name if you could choose a different name what would it be. Now without moving - point out partners #1 and #2 and introduce them to your Partner #3.

Leader's Hints: This is a great beginning activity for a mixer but also serves as a way to later in your event or program to call out "Find your Partner #3" to do the next activity.

Prepare To Meet Your Doom

Formation: partners scattered anywhere

Equipment: none

Time: 5-10 minutes

Have everyone face a partner and practice playing Rock, Scissors, Paper – make sure everyone knows what beats what. Now begin the game. Partners introduce themselves to each other "Hi, my name is Beth" "Hi, my name is Gina". Then one person says "Prepare to meet your doom!!"

The partner responds by placing both hands on their own tummy and giving a LOUD "Ha-Ha-Ha!!!"

Then each couple plays one round of RSP – whoever loses now becomes the cheerleader for their partner (so if Gina wins, Beth follows Gina to another person that Gina is going to challenge and shouts "go Gina, yeah Gina, etc). The game continues until only two players are left (with the rest of the group being cheerleaders for one or the other player).

Look Up, Look Down

Supplies Needed: None

Formation: Circle

Instructions: Have your group form one large circle. Begin by telling everyone to “Look Down” at his or her own shoes. Now tell them to “Look Up” at anyone in the circle. The words “Look Down” begin each round of the game. While they are looking down, they find another pair of shoes and that is the person they will look at when you say “Look Up”. When ANY two people in the circle make eye contact with each other they quickly trade places in the circle. Keep repeating “Look Down, Look Up” – give people just a few seconds to trade places before continuing.

Leader’s Hints: There are numerous variations to this game. For example, after teaching the game make multiple circles of about 8-12 people in each circle. When two people make eye contact they leave their circle and go find any other circle to join (they do not have to move together). You can add a verbal element to the game that when two people make eye contact that they let out a short scream (AHHH!) and then trade places or move to another circle. This game can be played seated in a circle and used to separate a group of people who might be disrupting an activity. You as the leader get the chance to separate the two or three people without ever having to “call them down” in front of others and they will never know that you were intentionally separating them.

Traffic Jam

Formation: Start as individuals then have partners

Equipment: any good hoedown or up beat 4/4 music)

Time: 10-15 minutes

Instruct the group to: clap hands 3 times, stamp feet 3 times, walk 4 steps any direction, repeat clap, stamp, walk. Now each person slide 8 counts one way and 8 back. Start out by doing this as individuals – be sure to tell people to that they mustn’t touch anyone while they are sliding to the music. Next have people to partner up and change the dance to clap 3, stamp 3, turn your partner with a right elbow, repeat and turn with a left elbow. Join hands with partner and slide 8, slide back. Repeat.

Leader’s Hints: After the group has this down you can get people to change partners during the slide part every so often. Slide as single then partner up quickly on the slide back with a new partner.

Arches

Formation: Circle

Equipment: Music

Time: 10-15 minutes

Instructions: Begin with your group in one large circle. Ask for 4-20 volunteers (this is dependent upon the size of your group so a group of 20 you would ask for 4 people) to move to the center of the space. Have the volunteers partner up and place themselves around the circle. Have the couples join hands to make an arch. The arches must keep their arms raised until the music stops. Have the remaining players face counterclockwise; start the music. The players walk single file under the arches until the music stops. The arches lower their arms and catch someone in their arch. Send these people to the middle of the room. Have each player pair up with another caught player and move to join in the circle. Continue playing until all members of your group have been caught and now have a partner. The more arches the more people you catch!!

Leader Hint: Great lead in for partnering up people for dancing or following with other games requiring partners (for example, Film Mixer or Thumb in the Hole).

Double Circle Mixer

Formation: two concentric circles, inside circle should face out and the outside circle should face the middle, should be facing a partner

Equipment: none unless using the Life Changing Story game

The idea of a double circle mixer is that you play one or two of the following games with one partner and then have the circles move so that they now face a new partner. Play a different game with this partner. Then move again. Here is how to move the group: Each circle needs to turn 1/4 of a turn to their OWN right. You should be standing with left shoulder to left shoulder with your current partner. Counting your current partner as #1 move forward counting up to #5. Stop and face #5. This is your new partner. Next time you move count 3. The number you move is random – adjust to the size of your group.

The following are some ideas of games to play that act as get to know you activities while in this configuration.

Lifestory

Formation: double circle (also works well in small group circle)

Equipment: none

One person starts and tells their lifestory in 15 seconds. Leader calls out change after 15 seconds and the other person starts telling their story. Or in a circle just have the next person to the right be the next person to share their lifestory. Continue until all members have had a turn.

Gotcha

Formation: double circle (also see note below)

Equipment: none

Face each other – put right hand in front flat with palm down. Stick your left index finger pointing up. You AND your partner now touch the index finger to the palm of your partner's right hand. Count to three and then on GOTCHA – try to remove your finger while catching your partner's finger with your left hand. Play best 2 out of 3. (can be used to easily put into small groups - Trade partners. Then move two couples together for playing in a group of 4, then 8, etc. until you have the size group you want for next activity.)

Fast Math

Formation: double circle (also works as partners scattered)

Equipment: none

Partners face each other. Start by having the partners just put one hand behind their back. On the count of 1,2,3 go each person thrust forward their hand with as many digits as they want held out. Object of the game is to be the first person to add up the combined fingers between themselves and their partner. Try that a few times, then have them use both hands. Can use subtraction, multiplication.

Small Group Game Ideas

Connect Four

Supplies: None

1. Ask participants to partner up with the person nearest to them. In the spirit of childhood games let them know they're going to play a quick game of connect four with their partner.
2. Explain that each pair will have 60 seconds to try and find 4 things (interests, hobbies, birthdays, pets, etc.) they have in common! As the leader, "loosely" time this activity.
3. After completing one round have each pair pull in another group of 2. In this group of four, have each pair introduce themselves and share how they are "connected". Once each pair has shared challenge the group of 4 to try and find 4 commonalities that connect them in 90 seconds (they can be some of the same if needed, but challenge them to try and find out more about one another and come up with some new ones.)

Tunnel Tag

Formation: Double circle, partners (london bridge style)

Equipment: None

Time: 10 minutes

Instructions: Have your group form one large circle. Next, have everyone turn and take a partner with both hands. The couples need to stand in the circle as if you are playing

London Bridge. If you have an even number of players then you, as the leader, can be the It, but if you have an odd number the person without a partner becomes the It. It begins by walking under the arches going counterclockwise. It then taps one person on the arm (inside or outside person). This person who was tagged drops his or her arch and starts to run under the arches in the OPPOSITE direction of the It (It is running counterclockwise and person tagged is running clockwise). Whoever gets back to the vacated place first grabs the person's hands and makes the arch. Now you either have the same It or a new It. Game continues with this It.

Leader's Hints: This is the perfect game to play after having played Arches as this game leaves your group already in the double circle of arches. Remind the runners going under the arches to watch out for the other person when they pass each other! If people are crashing, just have your group use a fast walk instead of running.

Elbow Tag

Formation: circle or scattered groups of threes

Supplies: none

- Object is to avoid being knocked off of your chain and getting tagged

Directions

- Appoint one person as a seeker, and the other as a runner
- Divide the rest of the group into groups of three
- Have the groups link elbows
- The runner is going to run to one of the groups and link elbows with one of the end people
- Whoever is on the opposite end of the threesome is now the runner, and must find a new group before they are tagged.
- If someone is tagged, they become it, and must give the previous seeker a two second head start.

Switch, Change, Rotate

Formation: lines of 6-8 people – choo choo style

Equipment: none

Have the group place their hands on the person's shoulders in front of them. Teach the groups what each command means and practice it until it looks like they know what they are doing before moving onto the next command.

Move = must walk continuously once leader has called this command out

Switch = front person in line goes to the rear

Change = whole line turns 180 degrees in place

Rotate = front person and rear person trade places

Freeze = stop in place

Now have the group "move" and practice as you call out the commands. Then have them Freeze. NOW tell them you are going to add one thing and that is to do this with their eyes closed. Give them about 2 minutes to come up with some strategy for

working together before beginning. Ask them to close their eyes and Move while you call out commands.

Leader's Hints: Remember that they are entrusting you as the leader to not let them run into walls, etc. Remind them to keep moving even when they are doing the other commands. Best to play this where you have physical boundaries (ie indoors or somewhere like a tennis court that is enclosed).

Loose Caboose

Formation: Scattered

Equipment: Bandanna

Instructions: Have your participants pair up and form "trains" (two people in a single line facing the same direction, with the person in the back holding onto the person in the front's shoulders). The trains then scatter around the playing area. Each train needs about five feet of free space around them. If there are an odd number of people, the extra person is it or the "loose caboose." If your numbers are even, then one couple break apart and become two "loose cabooses." When the leader starts the game, the "loose cabooses" then try to attach themselves to the trains. They do this by latching onto the shoulders of the person at the end of the train. When this happens, the person in front of the train is set loose, and becomes the new "loose caboose."

Leader's Hints: For safety reasons, have a rule where the trains are not allowed to move away from their spot to avoid being latched onto (the trains can and should spin around in place). Also, if you only have one "loose caboose," and that person is having trouble attaching themselves to a train, then just add a couple more "loose cabooses" into the fray. A good rule of thumb is to have one "loose caboose" for every ten participants. Encourage the "loose cabooses" to work together!

King Frog

Formation: group sits in a circle

Equipment: none

Object is to progress to the "king frog chair"

- Go around the circle and have each person pick a SILENT motion that represents an animal.
- Appoint someone as the king frog. They will be the leader.
- King Frog starts the rhythm out by making their motion, and passes it on by making someone else's motion.
- When someone messes up the rhythm of the game, or makes a wrong motion, they go the last spot (to the right of king frog) and everyone below shifts up a seat.
- The catch is that the motion stays with the seat and not with the person. So remember what motion is at each seat.

Physical Gossip (or Motion Pass)

Formation: Lines or around the table seated

Equipment: Marker, paper, drawings

Instructions: Have your group have a seat in a line, facing the same direction. Show the last person in line a drawing (see examples below). The last person in line then reproduces this drawing using his or her finger on the back of the person directly in front of him or her. The drawing is passed up the line in this same manner until it is drawn on the back of the first person in line. The first person in line then draws on the paper what was drawn on his or her back. The drawings are then compared. The first person in line goes to the back of the line while everyone moves forward one chair. Begin again with a new drawing.

Leader's Hints: Start by using simple drawings, a tree, a stick person, a house, and then increase the difficulty as appropriate. In order for the game not to be long and drawn out, we usually tell the groups that they can only draw the picture on the person's back twice before that person passes the drawing forward. Otherwise, perfectionists will keep drawing the design over and over again until the person "gets it"!! This game is easily adapted to a theme: a Christmas tree, snowman, snowflake, stocking.

Zoom-Mooz

Formation: circle of entire group

Equipment: none

Time: 2-5 minutes

Have everyone form a circle, and pick a person to be the starter. The starter looks at the person on his/her right and says Zoom. The word Zoom is passed all the way around the circle, until Zoom gets back to the starter. Now, get the watch ready and time how fast the group can pass Zoom around the circle. Each person must finish saying Zoom before the next person starts. After your group has gotten good at passing Zoom, have the starter look to his/her left and pass Mooz. Practice with Mooz a couple of times, and then start Zoom and Mooz at the same time.

Leader's Hints: We don't recommend playing this game in circles with more than 15 participants. If you have more than 15 participants, just break up into smaller groups. After you have taught the game, the small groups can race against the clock trying to better their own times. This game will not take long to play, so make sure you are ready with something else!

Prayer Portraits

Formation: groups of 3-8 – seated

Equipment: blank sheet of paper and marker per person

Time: 10 minutes

In a small group (3-8) have each person take a piece of blank paper and write their name at the bottom of the page. Now pass the paper to the right one place. Now each person draws the shape of the head of the person whose name is on the bottom of the page. Pass it to the right and tell them to draw THIS person's mouth, pass and draw the nose, pass and draw the eyes, pass and draw the ears, pass and draw the hair, pass and draw extras like glasses, jewelry, etc. Now pass the paper back to the original owner and have everyone pass their portrait across the circle. Each person takes home the portrait of another member of the group to pray for this person for the week.

North South Central

Formation: single file line in the center.

Equipment: Cones or other items to mark boundaries

Time: 5-10 minutes

This game is best played either on a soccer field or in a large room (such as a gymnasium). Cones will be placed equal distance on each end of the field or gym to symbolize the directions of North and South and 2 cones will be placed equal distance in the middle to symbolize Central. All participants will line up at Central. Small group leaders will be on opposite ends of the field and one will be the announcer. The announcer yells North and points towards those cones. The students are then to run to the North location. The last person to cross the line is out. Call that person over to you and give them praise "good job" and a high five. They become a line judges and help the small group leaders determine who is out next. As participants get out of the game give them high fives and praise and ask them to be line judges or cheer on the others. The last person remaining is your winner. **Note: Small group leader can yell a direction and then point to the opposite direction to see if the participants are paying attention. If participants run towards the direction the small group leader is pointing instead of the direction they yelled, they are out of the game as well.**

Knots

Formation: Participants stand in circle (or 2 circles if you have a large group)

Equipment: None (or use with hose - one per person)

Time: 5-8 minutes

This is a great icebreaker activity to use with the youth in small groups. Have the group stand and make a circle (you can make 2 circles if you have a large group). Each participant is to join hands with someone else (you cannot join hands with the person beside you). Once hands are joined the group(s) will form a giant knot. Small group

leaders ask the groups to untie themselves without any form of communication (No Talking, No body motions or gesturing, etc). After about 2 minutes if group or groups are not untied, ask them to drop hands. Small group leader can ask what challenge(s) the group faced trying to untie themselves (Most will give the answer "Not being able to communicate). Ask them to join hands again and tie themselves into a knot. This time they are able to communicate to untie themselves. After the group(s) have finished, explain to them that at times we as human's are tied in knots (with things going on in our homes, bullying, etc) and it is hard to break those knots if we don't communicate with someone, even God through prayer.

Hodgy Podgy

Everybody's It

Minister's Cat