

# 16 Activities That Promote Conversations About Resilience

This Activity Manual is Sub-Section of the “**Building Blocks**”  
Workshop- A Program Framework for Working with  
Children Affected by Trauma

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# Introduction

In 2004, Edgework partnered with the Association of Hole in the Wall Gang Camps to help launch a camp in the forest outside of Chang Mai, in northern Thailand. This camp was one of the first in the country to serve children who were affected by HIV.

Camp Sanook Sanook (Camp Happy Happy) was a success and plans were underway to repeat it for the following year when the devastating Tsunami struck in December, 2004.

As the emergency situation slowly came under control in 2005, almost every youth-facing service was facing a crush of challenges, not least of which were an entire demographic of children dealing with late effects of this disaster.

We returned in July and November of 2005 to work with 16 different youth services organizations to offer a level of training and approach on ways to promote resilience through caring adult relationships, positive program culture and play. The “Building Blocks” workshop provided senior youth workers with a set of basic skills and tools to help train their staff in trauma-informed ways to engage with children.

One of these tools was a short activity guide describing 16 games to play with children, each of which can spark conversation and skill building around a number of life skills that foster resilience. These activity guides, in their entirety, are included in this document.

Since this workshop Edgework was conducted back in 2005 Edgework has continued to conduct extensive research on program approaches that can make a positive impact on mental health symptoms, promote resilience and strengthen children’s efficacy. Through rigorous design, implementation, and evaluation, our program approaches are being successfully being implemented in places like Malawi, Namibia, the United States, Ethiopia, South Africa, and Gaza.

For more information about how our research and design could support your organization please contact us at: [info@edgeworkconsulting.com](mailto:info@edgeworkconsulting.com)

# Activities Appendix

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12. Pass the Hula Hoop
13. Hand Squeeze
14. Celebration Circle
15. Commonalities
16. Hit the Beach Ball



## Activity-Outcomes Matrix

This is a list of the Life Skills highlighted by the 16 activities in the training. The left hand column identifies the specific skill and the top row identifies the number of the activity from the Activity Index. This list is just the beginning!

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Taking Turns	X	X					X				X		X			
Dealing with Rejection	X															
Learning things you share in common	X														X	
Conversation Skills	X	X														
Relationship Building Skills	X	X														
Learning to ask questions		X														
Prioritizing Tasks			X							X						X
Learning from Mistakes			X													
Dealing with Stress			X													
Taking Risks				X					X							
Supporting Peers				X	X						X			X	X	X
Reading Emotions				X												
Assessing Risk					X				X							
Decision Making					X											
Trying more than once						X	X					X	X			
Working with Partners						X										
Problem Solving						X	X			X	X	X	X			X
Coaching Others							X									
Teamwork							X	X		X	X	X				X
Group Decision Making								X								
Sharing Thoughts with the Group													X	X	X	
Changing Plans										X						
Working Under Pressure												X				
Experiencing Pride in Yourself															X	

# Community Bingo



## Activity Overview

Participants try to get a “bingo” card completed by asking other participants questions from their card. In a short period of time, participants meet many people in the group and learn interesting facts about one another.

### Recommended Group Size:

15 to 100

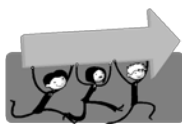
### Timing:

15 to 30 minutes

### Typical Goals:

Activity Skills	Life Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learning names</li><li>• Writing and spelling names</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Taking turns</li><li>• Meeting and introducing yourself to peers</li><li>• Learning things you may have in common with others in the group</li><li>• Dealing with rejection</li></ul>

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## Facilitation Instructions

### Materials:

- Printed “Bingo” cards
- Pencils or pens
- Music (optional)
- Candy (optional)

### Setting up the Activity:

Invite the group to stand in a circle. This activity can also be played with a group that is sitting in chairs. Participants can move in between the rows of chairs and tables to meet one another.

### **Introducing the Activity:**

Explain the following:

*We are now going to play a game called “Community Bingo.” This is a fast and fun game that will help us meet people and learn interesting facts about each other.*

*Each person will get a “Bingo” card with 25 boxes. In each box, there is a short statement that describes a fact that could be true for one or more people in this group.*

*When the game begins, you will walk up to someone and ask them if one of the statements in a box is true for them. If the answer is “yes,” then you write their name in that box. That box is now completed.*

*For example, I might walk up to someone (demonstrate this) and ask them, “Do you like to sing?” If the person answers “no,” then you can ask them about a different fact in a different box and find out if this one is true for them. If the answer is still “no” the pair can keep playing until either a “yes” is found or there are none that are true. Each person can write someone’s name on their card only once.*

*The goal for the game is to socialize and meet each other. So, if you already know that one of the facts on the card is true for someone on your team, you can’t write their name in that box until you talk with them.*

*You may not write your name on the box anywhere.*

*The middle box is a FREE SPACE. You don’t need anyone’s name in this box.*

*The first person to have all of the squares filled in with names, one name per square, will be the winner!*

The game ends when someone on the group has all 25 boxes completed and shouts, ‘Bingo!’ when they are finished.

### **Special Safety Considerations:**

There are no specific safety issues for this activity.

### **Questions for the Group:**

1. Encourage everyone to add up how many boxes they were able to complete. Be sure to give acknowledgement for playing the game.
2. Next, you can ask the group if there are any particular boxes they had difficulty finding someone to fill in their name. This can be a fun way to learn some of the things unique things that people have done.
3. Look over the card and ask the group to respond by raising their hand, if the statement you read is true. This is a fun way to quickly debrief the activity and find out what types of things from the card people in the team have done.

4. What did you learn from this activity?

**Additional Facilitator Notes:**

- This game can be more fun if there is some playful and fast paced music playing.
- You can encourage participation by providing some kind of reward or recognition for anyone who gets '5 in a row' while they are trying to get all 25 squares completed. '5 in a row' is any row or column or diagonal that has a name in every box. Each time someone gets '5 in a row' they can be encouraged to shout 'Bingo!' You can give out candy each time someone gets '5 in a row.'

**Other Ways to Play the Activity:**

- People can play in pairs or groups of three to make the game more of a team experience.
- If you don't have much time, you can instruct participants to just get '5 in a row.'

**WRITE PEOPLE'S NAMES IN BOXES THAT DESCRIBE THEM.  
YOU CAN USE A NAME ONLY ONCE.**

HAS A YOUNGER BROTHER	LIKES TO PLAY SOCCER	LIKES TO DANCE	LIKES ICE CREAM	IS WEARING A HAT
CAN SAY "HELLO" IN AT LEAST 2 LANGAUGES	LIKES TO READ	TRAVELS MORE THAN 3 KM TO SCHOOL	LIKES TO TELL STORIES	HAS LIVED IN 2 OR MORE PLACES
HAS SEEN A SUNRISE	HAS BROKEN A BONE IN THEIR BODY	<b>BINGO FREE SPACE</b>	IS WEARING SOMETHING BLUE	LIKES TO STAY UP LATE
IS WEARING SANDALS	WAS BORN IN MARCH	HAS BEEN CAMPING	ENJOYS LEARNING NEW THINGS	LIKES TO COOK
SPEAKS TWO OR MORE LANGUAGES (not necessarily well)	LIKES TO GO FISHING	LIKES TO SING	WAS BORN IN NOVEMBER	HAS AN OLDER SISTER



# Pairs Interviews



## Activity Overview

Participants meet other participants through a series of fun, paired conversations.

### Recommended Group Size:

10-80

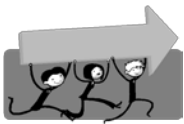
### Timing:

10-40 minutes

### Typical Goals:

Activity Skills	Life Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learning about another person</li><li>• Following directions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conversation skills: active listening, paying attention</li><li>• Relationship building skills: getting to know people, being interested in their story</li><li>• Learning how to ask questions</li></ul>

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## Facilitation Instructions

### Materials:

- List of pairs interview questions

### Setting up the Activity:

Make sure the group is in a big enough space for everyone to move around. Invite everyone in the group to find a partner. Instruct the pairs to stand together and help anyone who has not found a partner.

### Introducing the Activity:

Explain the following:

*I am going to give you and your partner a topic to talk about for 2 minutes. After each conversation, we'll ask for volunteers to share what you talked about with the whole group. Then you'll switch partners and I'll give you a new topic to discuss.*

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Then, introduce the first topic. Remind participants that they only have 2 minutes for both of them to respond to the question and begin the activity.

When 2 minutes have passed, invite the group to bring their attention back to you and ask them if anyone is willing to tell the group what they talked about in their paired conversation. Make sure that everyone knows they should only share what their partner said it's okay to share.

After you have heard a few responses from participants, ask everyone to thank their partner for their conversation and to find a new partner. Once everyone has a new partner, call the group to attention again. Introduce the next topic and remind them of how much time they have for the conversation.

You can repeat this process as many times as you want.

### **Sample Questions for Pairs Interviews:**

1. What do you like to do for fun?
2. What is your favorite subject in school? Why?
3. What do you want to be when you grow up? Why?
4. What is one strength/talent that you have that you are proud of?
5. Where are your most favorite/fun/safe places to visit in the community?
6. What is your favorite meal?
7. What kind of music do you like to listen to?

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### **Special Safety Considerations:**

There are no special safety considerations for this activity.

### **Questions for the Group:**

1. What was it like to do this activity?
2. What did you learn about the group from this activity?
3. With so many people talking at the same time, how did you know that your partner was really listening to you? What did they do/say to show you that they were interested in what you had to say?

### **Additional Facilitator Notes:**

- It is recommended to start with fun questions at the beginning of the activity to help everyone to get comfortable talking with one another. If you have more serious questions, save those for later rounds.
- It can be fun to play music (not too loud) during the conversations. This can also be a good way to help get everyone's attention at the end of a conversation - you can tell them that when the music stops, they should stop their conversations.
- It can be fun to create playful ways to find new partners. For example, instead of simply telling everyone to find a new partner, you can invite everyone to find someone else who:

1. is taller shorter than you, but not the same height
2. has bigger or smaller feet than you, but not the same size
3. feels the same way about carrots that you do (love them, hate them, etc.)
4. is not born in the same month as you

**Other Ways to Play the Activity:**

- Another way to set up the activity is to have the group divide in half. One half of the group makes a circle and stands with their backs towards the center of the circle. Everyone else stands in front of and facing someone in that circle. This way you have two concentric circles of people, one inside the other, with pairs of people facing each other. Then, when you want the group to change partners, you invite one of the circles of people to move to the left or right and everyone will then be standing in front of a new conversation partner!

# Group Juggle



## Activity Overview

Participants throw a number of objects to one another, trying to keep as many objects in the air as they can without dropping any of them.

### Recommended Group Size:

6 to 25

### Timing:

10 to 30 minutes

### Typical Goals:

Activity Skills	Life Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hand-eye coordination skills</li><li>• Learning names</li><li>• Throwing and catching skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Balancing multiple tasks at the same time</li><li>• Making and learning from mistakes</li><li>• Strategizing ways to anticipate and deal with stress</li></ul>

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## Facilitation Instructions

### Materials:

- 8 to 10 objects that are easy to throw and catch.

### Setting up the Activity:

Invite the group to stand in a circle.

### Introducing the Activity:

Start with one object in your hand. Explain to the group that you are going to throw the object to someone in the circle. When that person catches it, they will throw it to someone else in the circle who has not caught the object yet. This throwing and catching will continue until every person in the circle has caught and thrown the object and it is finally thrown back to you.

Tell participants that they should try to remember who is throwing the object to them and who they are throwing it to, since the activity will repeat that same throwing order.

Allow the group to practice throwing the object through the exact same sequence to familiarize themselves with the throwing order.

Ask the group: *How does it feel to “juggle” one object?* Answers will likely be: comfortable, easy, fun, etc.

Next, ask the group: *What is something that you have to juggle or deal with in your life every day?* Take a piece of tape and write one response on the tape. Then stick the tape on the object.

Next, ask the group: *What else do we typically have to juggle in our life?* Answers to these questions include: school, homework, chores, friends, sports teams, family commitments, school clubs, dating/relationships, etc. Write the group’s answers on different pieces of tape, and then stick those pieces of tape on other objects.

Invite the group to try to juggle more than one object, so that they can make the activity more “life-like” and challenging.

Start by throwing one object. Once the first object is thrown, start throwing the next object, and continue until all the objects are in motion. The activity will typically become more chaotic and hectic and objects might get dropped.

After a few minutes of juggling the objects, stop the activity again, and ask: *How does it feel to juggle all of these objects?* Answers may include: more stressful, harder, more fun, etc.

Next, ask: *How can we help ourselves and each other to successfully juggle so many objects?* Allow the group to strategize and share ideas for how to be more successful.

Start the juggling again. You can stop the activity once the team feels like they have been successful.

### **Special Safety Considerations:**

At the beginning of the activity it is important to demonstrate how you expect the throws to be made. Demonstrate an underhand throw, while calling the person’s name you are throwing the object to. Watch for people throwing the objects too quickly and for people bumping into each other when attempting to catch an object.

### **Questions for the Group:**

1. What strategies did you use to improve your skills in juggling all of these objects?
2. What strategies can we use from this activity that can help us juggle many different aspects of our lives?

3. What happened during the activity when someone dropped the ball? Answer: we picked it up and kept going with the activity. Dropping the ball is like making a mistake. In your life, is it okay to make mistakes? What are some good ways to react when we make a mistake?
4. What can we learn from this activity that can help us to be less anxious if we feel overwhelmed or stressed?

**Additional Facilitator Notes:**

- At the beginning of the game you can ask everyone to hold their hands out in front of them to show that they have not caught the ball yet. Once the game begins and they have caught the ball and have thrown it to someone else, they should put their arms at their sides. This way it is easy to see who has not caught the ball yet.
- To make the activity more challenging, you can ask participants to jog in place while they juggle the objects.
- Make sure you select objects that are not too hard or too light to throw or catch. You also want to make sure that the objects will not injure anyone when being thrown.
- It can be fun to ask the group to set a goal for how many objects they can successfully juggle. This helps participants think about how many different priorities or aspects of their life they can manage before feeling like it's too much.

**Other Ways to Play the Activity:**

- This activity can be used as a fun way to learn names. Start with one object and throw it randomly around the circle (no set order). Every time the person throws the object, she has to call the person's name she is planning to throw it to. Once most people in the group have had the chance to catch the ball, start a second ball, and eventually a third ball. You can challenge the team to continue to play until at least three people are willing to try to name everyone on the team.
- Once the team has thrown one object in the same sequence for several turns, tell them that you are going to time how long it takes them to throw the object through the entire sequence. Explain the additional rules for the game: 1) The object must always start and stop with the same thrower, 2) The team has to keep the same throwing sequence, 3) Everyone must make contact with the object. Give the team between 10 and 15 minutes to try to achieve the fastest time that they can. Note: team members do not have to stand in the same spot in the circle. They could rearrange their order as long as they keep the same throwing sequence. Teams can achieve very fast times for this activity!

# Hitchhiker



## Activity Overview

In this theater-based game, participants take turns riding in an imaginary car. Anyone in the car instantly takes on the mood and emotions of the new person joining the car and the fun begins as each new person adds a totally different mood to the car - laughter, excitement, confusion, etc.

### Recommended Group Size:

10-30

### Timing:

10-15 minutes

### Typical Goals:

Activity Skills	Life Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Acting and improvisational skills</li><li>• Representing behaviors that correspond to different emotions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Taking risks in front of a group</li><li>• Supporting peers while they are taking risks</li><li>• Understanding/reading different emotions</li></ul>

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## Facilitation Instructions

### Materials:

- 3 chairs for the actors or you can also have them stand or sit on the floor

### Setting up the Activity:

Arrange the 3 chairs, two next to each other and one behind the other two, all facing the audience. Make sure the group is sitting close to the chairs, either on the floor or in chairs, theater-style. This activity is best presented with three volunteers, ideally, who have been prepared for the activity in advance.

### Introducing the Activity:

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Ask for two volunteers to take seat in the front two chairs. Explain the following:

1. *Imagine this is a car (point to the three chairs). Really physicalize the space - this means walk up to the chairs and “draw” the outline of the car, point out the front and back seat, etc. If you are a driver you must DRIVE. If you are a passenger utilize the space as well.*
2. *This is a special car because anyone who enters this car brings with them a certain quality, emotion, feeling, style, and infects the whole car with this particular trait. All you have to do is raise your hand and you can have a chance to ride along for a while.*
3. *Once a hitchhiker is picked up, all members who remain in the car pick up this quality or trait or emotion.*
4. *As you pick up a hitchhiker, the driver rotates out and becomes part of the active audience. The previous hitchhiker becomes the front seat passenger (moves to the passenger’s seat), and the previous passenger becomes the driver (moves to the driver’s seat).*
5. *When you are not in the car, you are watching the car and waiting for your next rotation into the car.*
6. *It is time for a new hitchhiker as soon as the previous hitchhiker has established the quality, all members of the car have created this quality in their person i.e. their voice, body, face and all are creating the same ENERGY, and the laughter from the audience has subsided.*

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Invite the two people in the car to start driving and turn to audience to ask for the first volunteer to start the game.

### **Special Safety Considerations:**

There are no specific physical safety considerations for this activity. However, this activity can feel like a big emotional risk for some participants because they are acting in front of the group. Make sure to allow anyone who does not want to play the freedom to choose not to play, but encourage them to join. Tell them to follow their impulses. Tell them: *anything works, all you have to do is bring in your idea and it is up to the passengers in the car to make it interesting.*

### **Questions for the Group:**

1. How do you feel?
2. What made this activity fun?
3. How did it feel to volunteer to be in the car? Did you feel differently after you took a turn in the car?
4. Was it a “risk” to volunteer to be in the car? Why or why not? How do we know that something we are doing feels risky?
5. Is it possible that this activity could feel like a risk for some of us and less of a risk for others? Why do you think this is so?



### **Additional Facilitator Notes:**

- This activity requires heavy directing in terms of positive coaching.... “Excellent choice,” “Good Listening,” “Nice shift in energy.” People are SCARED and need encouragement. You cannot overdo the supportive and enthusiastic coaching.
- You can stop action in the car to clarify and add direction.
- The facilitator is like a fourth car member, sort of helping the folks in the front seat figure out how to behave if they have not gotten it. You can rotate yourself into the car as well.
- Passengers in the front seat often say, “How can I take on this quality if I can’t see what he/she is doing behind me?” Tell them they can sort of cheat glances, but often a certain very sensitive kind of listening, “tuning in” to the other people in the car, will help them know how to act.
- You often have to call for a new hitchhiker...Say, “Come on guys, let’s not leave them out there with nothing to do, bring in something new. Anything works. It is critical that this be a fast-paced activity, with lots of switches of people in the car. Encourage shifts from high to low energy.
- Even if only 5 people want to play to begin with this is fine. Keep encouraging and checking in with the folks who are not participating...often they want to participate but just can’t find the right moment to join.

(We want to thank Amy Goldfarb of the Organization Learning Group for her contribution to writing this Activity Guide- [www.ogranizationlearninggroup.com](http://www.ogranizationlearninggroup.com))

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# Freeze Tag



## Activity Overview

Participants play a game of tag where those who are “It” attempt to “freeze” everyone else by tagging them. Players who are not “frozen” can “unfreeze” other players by tagging them with a partner.

### Recommended Group Size:

10-30

### Timing:

10-20 minutes

### Typical Goals:

Activity Skills	Life Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Running skills</li><li>• Agility skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Helping peers</li><li>• Assessing risk and decision making</li></ul>

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## Facilitation Instructions

### Materials:

- Cones to mark the playing boundary

### Setting up the Activity:

Mark off a space with the cones that is large enough for participants to have room to run around freely but not more than 15-20 meters across. Clear the playing space of any obstacles.

### Introducing the Activity:

Gather the group in a circle to start the game. Explain that there are going to be two people who are “It.” These two people are trying to tag everyone while the other players will be trying to run away from them. Here are the rules for the game:

- No one can run outside of the playing boundaries.
- If you are tagged, you freeze where you are (in other words, stand still).

- You must remain frozen until everyone is tagged or you are “unfrozen” by some of the other players.
- In order to become “unfrozen” two players must run up and stand next to you. Each person will reach out their arms to grab hands with the other person, with you in the middle. They will then wave their arms up and down, while shaking their hips and shout, “You are free!” three times! (This is a very silly thing to do, so it’s important to demonstrate this to the group so that they see the fun of it). After this, you are free.
- If one of the people helping to unfreeze someone is tagged, they become frozen too.
- You may move your head and talk if you are frozen, but you may not move your body.
- The game ends when either everyone except the “Its” has become frozen or the facilitator calls “Time!”

### **Special Safety Considerations:**

This is a very active game and participants will be running in all directions. Be sure to remind everyone to look where they are running so that they do not run into each other. Monitor the two “Its” to make sure they do not push anyone when they try to tag people. And finally, it can become very tiring being one of the “Its.” You may want to invite other people to either switch into one of the “It” roles or add more people to the “It” group.

### **Questions for the Group:**

1. Did you have fun in this game? What made it fun?
2. How many of you helped someone who was frozen? Why did you decide to help them?
3. What kinds of strategies did you use to either try to tag people or to avoid being tagged?

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### **Additional Facilitator Notes:**

- This is a game that you may want to join in. Your energy and playfulness can add to the fun of the activity.

### **Other Ways to Play the Activity:**

- There are many fun gestures, dances and things to say that you can use to determine how people can become “unfrozen.” Be creative. Also, once the group knows how to play, you can ask them to come up with their own ideas for making the game different and fun.

# Catch the Ball with the Towel



## Activity Overview

Two or more participants hold the ends of a towel (or sheet) and then attempt to throw and catch an object using only the towel.

### Recommended Group Size:

4-40. The size of this activity is limited by the number of towels, sheets and objects you have available.

### Timing:

10-45 minutes

### Typical Goals:

Activity Skills	Life Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agility skills</li><li>• Hand-eye coordination skills</li><li>• Throwing skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Working together with a partner</li><li>• Trying something more than once</li><li>• Problem solving</li></ul>

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## Facilitation Instructions

### Materials:

- One towel/pillowcase/sheet for every 2 participants. (They will be working in pairs for this game)
- 1 small ball per pair

### Setting up the Activity:

Be sure that you are playing in a large open space free of obstacles players may run into or trip over. If you are indoors make sure the ceilings are very high.

### Introducing the Activity:

Ask the group to find partners. Give each pair a towel and a ball. Explain that everyone is going to have some time to play catch. The difference is that nobody is allowed to actually

catch the ball with their hands. You are going to both hold onto the ends of the towel and launch and catch the ball using the towel! Only the ends of the towel can be held and the object can only touch the towel during a throw or catch.

Ask for a volunteer to help you to demonstrate how it works. **Technique:** hold onto the corners of the towel. Place the ball on the towel. Both of you should hold the towel loosely, so that the middle of the towel is lower than the ends. When you are ready to throw, pull back on the corners and lift up. The ball will go flying into the air. Teams who practice can successfully launch the ball very high and very far, but to do that requires a lot of teamwork.

Announce that teams will have a chance to practice launching and throwing. They can launch the ball into the air and then catch it in the towel.

Once teams have had a chance to practice, assign each pair to play catch with another pair. Now the teams can stand about 4-8 meters away from each other and attempt to throw and catch the ball, back and forth. If teams are feeling confident in their success with this game, you can challenge them to move further back. Keep track of how many catches in a row two teams can make before they drop the ball.

### **Special Safety Considerations:**

The highest safety risk for this activity is when a pair is trying to catch the ball. They may be running together while trying to hold the towel AND watch the ball. Someone may trip and fall. There is also a risk that someone may try to launch the ball with a lot of force and injure their arm or their partner's arm with the force of how they pull on the towel.

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### **Questions for the Group:**

1. What types of techniques did you find most effective? How did you figure out these techniques?
2. What examples can you think of that show you and your partner working together as a team?
3. How did it feel when you made a great throw or catch? Did that feeling make you feel like you could try something harder the next time? Any examples?

### **Other Ways to Play the Activity:**

- There are many, many ways to play this activity. You can challenge teams to see who can throw the ball the farthest, play catch with more than two pairs at a time, play with more than one ball, etc.
- You can also play a version of this game on a volleyball court. For this game, you use a bed sheet and at least four people per team. They hold onto all four corners of the bed sheet and launch a volleyball back and forth across the net for points. You can have up to about 10 people holding onto a bed sheet.

# Giant Jump Rope



## Activity Overview

The entire group attempts to pass through a giant spinning rope without anyone making contact with the rope.

### Recommended Group Size:

4-30

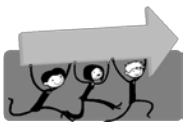
### Timing:

10-45 minutes

### Typical Goals:

Activity Skills	Life Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Running skills</li><li>• Agility skills</li><li>• Timing how to run through the rope</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Taking time to problem solve</li><li>• Handling setbacks</li><li>• Coaching and helping team members</li><li>• Group problem solving</li><li>• Taking turns</li></ul>

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## Facilitation Instructions

### Materials:

- 1 length of medium to heavy-weight rope at least 5 meters long

### Setting up the Activity:

Select a flat and space to play. Lay the rope out on the ground. You should be holding one end and your co-facilitator or a volunteer from the group holding the other end. Ask the entire group to stand on one side of the rope, far enough away so that when you start spinning the rope, no one will be hit by it.

### **Introducing the Activity:**

Explain the following:

*You want to get your entire team from one side of the rope to the other. Once the rope starts spinning, the only way to get from this side of the rope to the other is to go through it. Here are the rules:*

- 1. No one can make contact with the rope. If anyone touches the rope, then the team has to start over again.*
- 2. Once the first person makes it successfully through the rope, at least one person must come through the rope for every rotation. If the rope spins a full rotation without anyone running through it, your team must start over.*

Typically, this activity takes about 15 to 30 minutes for a team of 10 to 20 participants to complete. It is recommended to provide them with a deadline for completing the activity so they can practice managing their time as well.

Announce that you will begin spinning the rope any time they ask and will stop spinning the rope whenever a rule is broken.

### **Special Safety Considerations:**

It is very important that the facilitators spinning the rope be ready to release their hold on the rope as soon as it hits a participant. The easiest way to do this is to just let go of the rope as soon as it hits someone. Also, remind participants to be careful how they run through the spinning rope, to avoid falling on the ground or bumping into another team member.

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### **Questions for the Group:**

1. What did you try that worked?
2. What did you try that didn't work?
3. How did you help/coach each other to succeed? (Encourage specific examples)
4. Did anyone get frustrated when mistakes were made? What allowed you to keep trying and not quit?

### **Additional Facilitator Notes:**

- It is recommended to spin the rope slowly and in a very large arc. This allows participants who may not be fast runners or someone with a disability (wheelchair) to get through without the rope without it appearing that you are changing the speed of the turns of the rope for any one participant.
- This activity can take many attempts for a team to succeed. Watch out for participants getting frustrated or blaming individuals who make mistakes. This can be a great opportunity to discuss and teach how to best handle mistakes and coach each other versus being critical of each other.

### **Other Ways to Play the Activity:**

There are many different ways to play this activity. Here are several of them:

- For a group of younger participants, you can make a rule that anyone who touches the rope while trying to run through has a “consequence.” They can tell a joke, name 5 people on the team, do a silly dance, etc.
- For another variation, challenge the group to see if they can get their entire team through the rope in the fewest number of rotations possible. Often, the group will try to get the entire team through the rope in one rotation!
- Another variation involves challenging the group to run through the rope in pairs (or groups of threes) for a certain number of rotations. For example, you could say to the group that they have to run through the rope with a partner for 15 consecutive turns of the rope. If there are only 6 pairs, then the pairs have to run through and then run back around the rope to line up for a second turn.
- You can challenge the team to try to line up next to the rope and all jump it at once.



# Giants, Wizards and Elves



## Activity Overview

Two teams line up in two rows facing each other. Each team acts out one of the three characters: Giants, Wizards, or Elves. Each character “wins” over another character, and the winning team chases the other team back to their finish line. During the chase, the winning team tries to tag people on the other team in order to “win” them over to their team.

### Recommended Group Size:

15-60

### Timing:

15-30 minutes

### Typical Goals:

Activity Skills	Life Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Running skills</li><li>• Agility skills</li><li>• Reaction skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Group decision making</li><li>• Processing information quickly</li><li>• Practice handling setbacks</li></ul>

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## Facilitation Instructions

### Materials:

- Objects to mark the playing area

### Setting up the Activity:

Divide the group in half and have them stand on the center line in one long row per team. Each team faces the other team. Keep about 2 meters of distance between the teams. You can draw lines in the dirt or use a thin rope to mark where the teams should stand. Mark another line approximately 10 to 15 meters behind each team. This is the finish line.

### Introducing the Activity:

Explain to the group that they will be participating in a fun competition where they will try to win members from the opposite team over to their team. To play the game, they have to learn about three characters: Giants, Wizards, and Elves.

Next, you will teach the teams how to act out each of the three characters. As you teach each character, have the group enthusiastically repeat back the character name and the motions that go with it.

1. Giants: stretch your arms above your head and open your hands like a towering giant, lean forward and shout, "Giants!"
2. Wizards: place one foot forward, place both your arms out in front of you like you are casting a spell, wave them a little and shout, "Wizards!"
3. Elves: bend down so you are almost sitting on the ground, cup your hands around your ears like an elf, bounce back and forth and shout, "Elves!"

After you have taught all three characters for the game, ask both teams to repeat each character to be certain they know all three.

Now, you will explain how to play the game:

*The first thing you will do when I am finished explaining the game is get together as a team to secretly decide which one of the three characters your entire team will be for the first round of the game.*

*Then, both teams will return to the middle of the field and stand facing each other the way you are now. I will then count to the number three. When you hear "Three!" both teams will act out their character. You should show the motions and shout out the name of the character at the same time.*

*Each character has a special power that wins over another character:*

- *Giants win over Wizards*
- *Wizards win over Elves*
- *Elves win over Giants*

*If the character your team acts out wins over the other team's character, then you will chase the losing team back to their finish line, trying to tag people on that team before they reach the line.*

*If the character your team acts out loses, you will run back to your finish line trying to avoid getting tagged. If you are tagged, you will join the winning team.*

*Each team will regroup to decide which character you will be for the next round.*

*If both teams show the same character, it is a tie and both teams will go back to choose a character again.*

The game ends when everyone ends up on one team or you run out of time.

After explaining the rules, ask for any questions. Then, send the teams to their sides to meet and choose a character.

**Special Safety Considerations:**

The main safety issue occurs when teams are running and chasing each other. People may trip and fall. There is also the chance that someone will try to tag someone and might push them by accident. Be sure to explain these safety issues to the group and ask them to partner with you in keeping the game fun and safe.

**Questions for the Group:**

1. Was the game fun? What factors made it fun?
2. There is a lot of pressure at the moment right before the teams reveal their chosen characters. What strategies did you use to manage that pressure?
3. What did it feel like to be on the team with more players? What did it feel like to be on the team with fewer players?

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**Additional Facilitator Notes:**

- If teams are showing the same character on several attempts, the game can lose some of its fun. To avoid that, you can invite the teams to come up with a “first” character and a “back up” character so they don’t have to meet again in case of a tie. This is also an excellent way to help kids see the value in having a backup plan.

**Other Ways to Play the Activity:**

- You can create any type of “characters” you want for the game, instead of using “Giants,” “Wizards,” and “Elves,” feel free to think of characters that are related to your culture or stories that your participants will be familiar with.

# Up-Down Ball Tag



## Activity Overview

Everyone in the group runs around trying to tag each other with several soft balls while avoiding being tagged at the same time.

### Recommended Group Size:

10-50

### Timing:

10-30 minutes

### Typical Goals:

Activity Skills	Life Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Running skills</li><li>• Agility skills</li><li>• Throwing skills</li><li>• Concentration skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Processing complex information at the same time and decision making</li><li>• Assessing relative risk taking</li><li>• Dealing with consequences of choices</li><li>• Staying in the game</li><li>• Voicing needs</li><li>• Strategizing and making plans</li></ul>

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## Facilitation Instructions

### Materials:

- 2 to 3 yarn balls or other soft objects that participants can throw at each other without hurting anyone (a pair of socks, for example).

### Setting up the Activity:

Create boundaries for a playing space. The space should be just big enough for everyone to run around without bumping into each other. Ask the group to meet in the middle of the playing space.

### **Introducing the Activity:**

Up-Down Ball Tag has two goals: try to hit other people with the balls to get them out and to avoid getting hit by an object to stay in the game. Here are the rules:

1. *The game will begin when I throw three balls into the air.*
2. *Anyone can pick up a ball and try to throw it at anyone else. If you are hit anywhere (except on your head) then you are out. You must sit down or kneel. But you are not out for the entire game.*
3. *If the person who hit you with the ball then gets hit by someone else, you, and everyone else hit by that person is back in the game! Therefore, it's important that when you get out, you pay attention to who it was that hit you with the ball.*
4. *If someone throws the ball at you and you catch it in the air, you can stay in the game, and the person who threw the object at you is out.*
5. *Only people standing can handle the balls.*
6. *If you are holding one of the balls you may only take one step (exception: if the ball rolls out of bounds, you may run and get it, return to the playing boundary and then take one step in before throwing).*
7. *The game ends when there is only one person left in the game.*

### **Special Safety Considerations:**

This is a very fast paced game with lots of running around. Make sure you are on the look-out for participants who are running around dangerously or not looking where they are going. Be sure that the objects are not being thrown at people's heads.

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### **Questions for the Group:**

1. There were so many things happening at once in that game. How did you keep track of all that information?
2. How did it feel if you got out? What were you thinking about while you were sitting out? How did it feel when you got back in? Did you strategize how to play differently/better from getting out of the game?
3. Did anyone take a risk and try to collect a ball but was hit by someone else while trying? How did that feel? How did you "bounce back" and keep playing?

### **Additional Facilitator Notes:**

- This is actually a game that rarely ends. There are almost always people who are getting back in to the game just as there are only a few people still playing. You may need to call the end of the game.

### **Other Ways to Play the Activity:**

- It is also possible to play this game with teams, either with pairs of participants working together or in groups of three's. If one person from the team is hit then the whole team has to sit down.

# “Join My Team” Tag



## Activity Overview

A single participant tags other participants with a ball to get them on her team, eventually bringing everyone over to her team.

### Recommended Group Size:

10-25

### Timing:

10-30 minutes

### Typical Goals:

Activity Skills	Life Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Running skills</li><li>• Agility skills</li><li>• Throwing and catching skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Building teamwork and collaborating with peers</li><li>• Strategizing and making “game plans”</li><li>• Changing plans mid-course</li></ul>

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## Facilitation Instructions

### Materials:

- 1 yarn ball (or another soft object like a sock or t-shirt tied up in a ball)
- Objects to mark the playing space

### Setting up the Activity:

Create boundaries for the activity. The boundaries should be big enough so that there is room for the group to run around, but not too big that people would get tired just crossing the space.

### Introducing the Activity:

Introduce the game by explaining that everyone in the group is part of the same team. Then ask for one volunteer who is willing to start a new team. This volunteer will be by himself for a while but reassure him that you are confident he will be able to get people to join his team.

Then, explain the rules:

1. *The volunteer will be given a ball to throw at anyone who is not on his team.*
2. *If he hits someone (not in the face), that person instantly joins his team.*
3. *No one on the other team can touch the ball.*
4. *Anyone holding the ball can only take one step and then must either throw the ball at someone from the other team or pass it to someone on his team.*
5. *The game ends when everyone becomes part of the new team.*

Allow everyone one minute to decide where, within the boundaries, they want to start the game. Typically, they will move as far as way as they can from the person who is starting with the object.

Give the ball to the volunteer and start the game.

The game ends when the last person has been tagged with the ball and has joined the new team.

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### **Special Safety Considerations:**

It is important to play on a flat and safe surface. Make sure there are no rocks or other obstacles that a participant could trip and injure herself on. This is a very high energy game with participants running in many different directions at once. Therefore, it is important to remind participants to be on the lookout for other participants and to avoid running into each other. Also, make sure the object you use to throw is very soft. It may not travel as far but it is important that even if it is thrown from close range, that no one will get hurt.

### **Questions for the Group:**

1. What kinds of ways did you try to tag people?
2. In the end which strategies worked best? Why do you think so?
3. When you were playing, did you ever have to change your approach? How did you decide what to do next?
4. Did you get better at the game the more you played? If you did, how did you figure out how to play better?

### **Additional Facilitator Notes:**

- At the beginning of the game it can be somewhat difficult for the person with the ball to hit anyone, as they will all try to run as far away as they can from him. However, once he tags someone, it will be much easier to get people to join his team since he will have a partner to work with to pass the ball and get closer to people they want to join their team.

- You will need to remind the people on the throwing team that they cannot move their feet when they have the ball. They often forget.
- This game offers many opportunities for both teams to make and change plans. You can help facilitate this by calling for “time outs” so that the two teams can meet separately. This also provides everyone with much needed rest time.
- Participants often like to play this game more than once. If you have time, consider playing the game several times. It provides participants the chance to try new strategies and learn from their previous play.

**Other Ways to Play the Activity:**

- In order to foster more immediate collaboration and teamwork, you can start the game with two people who are trying to get everyone else to join their team.



# Blanket Name Game



## Activity Overview

Two teams sit on opposite sides of a hanging blanket. The blanket is dropped, and the teams compete against each other to see who can name people on the other team first.

### Recommended Group Size:

8-40

### Timing:

5-20 minutes

### Typical Goals:

Activity Skills	Life Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learning names</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Practice making mistakes in front of others</li><li>• Solving problems creatively</li><li>• Taking turns</li><li>• Identifying positive characteristics in peers</li></ul>

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## Facilitation Instructions

### Materials:

- 1 large blanket or tarp - thick enough so that neither team can see through the material.

### Setting up the Activity:

Invite a co-facilitator or participant to hold one corner of the blanket. Take the opposite corner of the blanket and hold it up like a curtain. Divide the group in half and ask each team to sit on opposite sides of the blanket, so that the teams cannot see one another. Make sure that participants are sitting at least one meter back from the blanket.

### Introducing the Activity:

Once the two teams are situated on each side of the blanket, lower it so that everyone can see you and proceed to explain the game:

*When we raise the blanket each team will send one representative up to the blanket. When the two representatives are standing on opposite sides of the blanket, we will count to “three” and drop the blanket. When the blanket drops the two representatives will see each other and the first person to name the other person (their first name only) is the winner. The person who wins brings the other representative over to their team.*

The game continues with each team sending a different representative (or the same representative) up to the blanket.

**Special Safety Considerations:**

Watch out for participants who are eager to take a turn and step on their teammates moving up to the blanket.

**Questions for the Group:**

1. Can anyone name everyone in the group?
2. Are there any names that you still don't know? (Encourage people to ask teammates their names so the entire group can learn.)
3. Are there any examples of being “creative” during the game that you remember and liked? Why did you like it?

**Additional Facilitator Notes:**

- In between each round it is recommended that you encourage participants to be creative at the blanket. People can stand in different positions, move towards one side of the blanket or the other, lie down, or even put on someone else's hat or jacket to disguise him/herself.
- A way to encourage learning names is to have the whole group shout out the name of the two people who just played the most recent round of the game.
- After each round, it is recommended that you encourage the “winning” team to welcome their new team member. This helps the person who just “lost” to feel welcomed by the group.

**Other Ways to Play the Activity:**

- Invite a pair of people from each team up to the blanket. One person in each pair sits with his/her back to the blanket and the other person in each pair sits facing their teammate (and the blanket). When the blanket drops, the person in each pair who can see the other side begins to describe the person on the other team with their back to them. The people with their backs to the other team are listening to the description and trying to guess who it is. What makes this version more challenging and a great get-to-know-you game is that the people describing the opposing team members cannot use any physical characteristics in their description - gender, age, clothes, height, etc. They must describe things about that person's personality, interests, sports activities, hobbies, etc.

# Pass the Hula Hoop



## Activity Overview

Teams hold hands in a circle and race to pass a hula hoop over and around their bodies without breaking contact.

### Recommended Group Size:

4-15 (this is the recommended size for one team. You can have more than one team playing at the same time, each with their own hula hoop.)

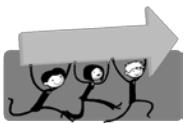
### Timing:

10-30 minutes

### Typical Goals:

Activity Skills	Life Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agility skills</li><li>• Flexibility skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Working under pressure and with competition</li><li>• Handling setbacks</li><li>• Problem solving and teamwork</li><li>• Making and improving plans</li></ul>

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## Facilitation Instructions

### Materials:

- 1 hula hoop per team (the hula hoop can be replaced with a piece of rope or string tied together in a circle or pieces of poster paper rolled into a narrow strip and then taped together to make a circle.)

### Setting up the Activity:

Divide the group into teams of 4-15 participants. Ask each group to stand in a circle and hold hands with the people on either side of them.

### Introducing the Activity:

Stand outside of the circle and ask two participants to let go of on another's hands. Place the hula hoop between these two participants and then ask them to reconnect their hands by reach through the hoop. Then let go of the hoop so that it hangs from their connected hands.

Explain the following:

*Here is your next team challenge: your team must move the hula hoop around the circle as quickly as you can. Here are the rules:*

1. *No one may release the hands they are holding.*
2. *You cannot use your fingers to help move the hoop around the circle.*
3. *You may do anything else you want, except break either of these 2 rules.*

Allow the team(s) several minutes to practice. When you are ready for round 1, say go and then start your watch. When the team has passed the hoop all the way around the circle back to the beginning stop your watch and announce their time. You may want to write their time on a piece of poster paper so that they can see their performance for each round.

Then, give the team 2 or 3 minutes of planning time to try to develop a strategy to make their second attempt faster than their first attempt.

Repeat this process several times before you announce the final round.

After the last round, gather the group together to discuss the activity.

### **Special Safety Considerations:**

Participants will swing their arms and legs very quickly to try to move the hoop around the circle. There is a chance that they might hit or kick the person next to them.

### **Questions for the Group:**

1. Did your team improve over time?
2. If so, what helped you get better? If you didn't, what do you think was the reason you were stuck?
3. What did you do during your planning time that was helpful?
4. Why is having planning time so helpful in life?

### **Other Ways to Play the Activity:**

- Instead of using a stopwatch to time the speed of the group, you can simply have multiple teams race against each other.
- This game can also be played with two hula hoops that start on opposite sides of the circle. Challenge the teams to pass both hoops in the same direction and see if they can have one hoop catch up to the other hoop.
- For a real challenge see if a team can pass two hoops in opposite directions!

# Hand Squeeze



## Activity Overview

Participants pass a pulse around the circle by gently squeezing each other's hands. They attempt to set a record for how fast they can complete the activity.

### Recommended Group Size:

6 to 100

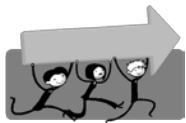
### Timing:

5 to 10 minutes

### Typical Goals:

Activity Skills	Life Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hand coordination skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Group problem solving</li><li>• Taking turns</li><li>• Trying to achieve a goal more than once</li><li>• Sharing your ideas in a group</li></ul>

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## Facilitation Instructions

### Materials:

- Stopwatch

### Setting up the Activity:

Invite the group to stand in a circle. Ask each participant to take hands with the person on either side of them.

### Introducing the Activity:

Explain that the challenge for the group is to pass a “pulse” around the circle as fast as they can. They pass the pulse by squeezing the hand of the person next to them in the circle. You can't squeeze the next person's hand until you feel your hand being squeezed by the person before you.

Ask the group if someone wants to volunteer to be the “Start-Stop” person. This person will start the pulse and when they receive the pulse at the end will shout, “Stop!”

When the group is ready, say, “Go!” and start your stopwatch. When you hear “Stop!” stop your watch and you can announce the time to the group. This is where the fun really begins. Challenge the group to set a new record for how fast they can pass the pulse around the circle.

**Special Safety Considerations:**

Some participants will express their enthusiasm for the activity by squeezing their neighbor’s hand very hard. You can prevent this by reminding participants that how hard you squeeze someone’s hand does not result in that person passing the pulse any faster. In fact, it might slow down the pulse.

**Questions for the Group:**

1. How does it feel to achieve your goal?
2. What did you have to do to achieve your goal?
3. How many times did you try to beat the record? Did you ever get frustrated with trying more than once? What did you do to manage your frustration?
4. Are there other things in life we have to be prepared to try more than once?

**Additional Facilitator Notes:**

- With a little practice, teams can do this activity very fast. It is possible for a group of 20 to pass the pulse around the circle in under 4 seconds.

**Other Ways to Play the Activity:**

- Try to pass the pulse with everyone having their eyes closed.
- Try to pass two pulses, in opposite directions and see which one makes it back to the Start-Stop person first.
- Try to pass two pulses, in the same direction, one after the other and see if the second pulse can catch up to the first pulse.
- A fun twist to this activity can be for each person to hold the pulse for a couple of seconds as if they were feeling a pulse of electricity, and to react with a fun dance or hand shake before passing on the pulse to the next person.

# Celebration Circle



## Activity Overview

Participants recognize and celebrate things that they have in common with each other.

### Recommended Group Size:

20-100

### Timing:

10-20 minutes

### Typical Goals:

Activity Skills	Life Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sharing ideas in a group</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Speaking up in front of a group</li><li>• Recognizing and praising peers</li></ul>

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## Facilitation Instructions

### Materials:

- List of topics for the activity (see “Introducing the Activity” for examples.)

### Setting up the Activity:

Invite the group to stand in a circle. Take a place in the circle as well.

### Introducing the Activity:

Explain the following to the group:

*We are going to participate in an activity that can help us recognize and celebrate what makes us similar and what makes us different. I am going to call out a statement. If that statement is true for you, then run into middle of the circle and “hi-five” each other, celebrating the fact that you have something in common with the other people who are in the middle. When you are done celebrating, run back to the circle and wait for the next statement.*

*If you don’t run into the middle for a statement, because the statement is not true for you, then you will stand in place and cheer for the group in the middle. We will celebrate them.*

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*When everyone is back in the circle, I will call out another statement and we'll play another round.*

It is recommended to have the group play a sample round of the game.

**Special Safety Considerations:**

There are no specific safety concerns for this activity.

**Questions for the Group:**

1. Did you learn anything new about anyone from playing this game?
2. What surprised you about things you did or did not have in common with the others in the group?

**Additional Facilitator Notes:**

- Once the group becomes comfortable playing the game, you could consider inviting participants to share statements they want to ask of the group, to see what they have in common with each other.

**Other Ways to Play the Activity:**

- It can be fun to create some fun gesture to replace the “hi-fives” that people do in the middle to celebrate. For example, people can run in, pause and clap their hands and shout “yeah!”



# Commonalities



## Activity Overview

Participants move around the group looking for people they share certain things in common with.

### Recommended Group Size:

20-100

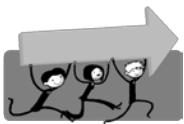
### Timing:

10-25 minutes

### Typical Goals:

Activity Skills	Life Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learning names</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Making their voice heard in a group</li><li>• Identifying facts about yourself</li><li>• Discovering facts that people have in common with each other</li><li>• Experiencing pride in who you are and what you do</li></ul>

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## Facilitation Instructions

### Materials:

- List of “Commonalities” categories

### Setting up the Activity:

This activity is best played in a flat, open space. Invite the group to gather close together or stand in a circle.

### Introducing the Activity:

Tell the group that they will be participating in an activity that encourages them to discover things they may have in common with each other. Then, say the following:

*I will call out a category. Let's say that the category is the month you were born. Your goal would be to find everyone else who has the same birth month that you do and to stand together in a group. By the end of each round we will have different groups clustered together by what they have in common. You will have approximately 45 seconds to find your group.*

Then, you can announce that "Birth Month" is the first category. It is helpful to say "Ready, Set, Go!" to get people motivated and moving quickly.

When everyone has found their group, spend about 2 to 3 minutes recognizing each group. For example, ask the January's to identify themselves, then the "February's, etc. Provide each group with a brief round of applause. Sometimes there are groups that have only one person. You may want to consider an extra acknowledgement from the larger group to that person for being unique.

Then, announce the next category and repeat the sequence.

**Examples of categories:**

- Favorite Fruit
- Favorite Ice Cream Flavor
- Favorite Sport
- Favorite Subject in School
- Birth Month
- State of Birth/Country of Origin
- Number One "Hoped for Goal for the Day"
- Favorite Day of the Week
- Significant Strength/Talent

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**Special Safety Considerations:**

Watch for people moving quickly and bumping into each other to find their groups.

**Questions for the Group:**

1. What did you learn about each other? Did any of the responses surprise you?
2. What other facts would you like to find out if you have in common with others in this group? How could you find out on your own?

**Additional Facilitator Notes:**

- After you announce each category, specify how much time participants will have to find everyone else in their category. It is recommended to give time frames that are very short in duration, such as 30 to 45 seconds. This short time frame increases the energy of the activity.
- With large groups it can sometimes be difficult for participants to find the group that they are looking for. You may want to designate an area near you as the "Lost and Found," explaining that anyone can come to this spot to get help locating their group.

This adds a level of comfort to the activity for people who may worry about not finishing on time or be slightly overwhelmed by the energy and movement of the activity.

- Sometimes there are two sections of the same group on different sides of the room that have not found each other. Instead of merging the two sections together, allow them to stay in separate sections. During the recognition of the groups they will find each other and typically have a funny reunion as they merge together.
- The real humor and fun of the activity is in the facilitation after individuals have formed groups. As the facilitator, look for and identify humorous and interesting things about the different groups or individuals.
- When deciding the categories you will use, consider how many potentially different groups you might get. The more groups you have, the longer the review will be between categories. For example, the "Favorite Fruit" category typically has between 6 and 12 groups while the "Strength/Talent" category could have as many groups as there are people in the room. Too many groups can sometimes slow down the energy of the activity.
- To encourage people to get to know each other, you may want to instruct participants to introduce themselves to the rest of their group while they are waiting for that round to end.
- You can add value to the activity by having each group share something about the category that brought them together. For example, if people are getting together by "Where You Are From," you can invite each group to teach or share something about their country - a dance, food specialty, etc.

# Hit the Beach Ball



## Activity Overview

Participants in the group take turns trying to keep a beach ball in the air.

### Recommended Group Size:

4 to 50 - the ideal group size is 4 to 12, but with more than one beach ball you can have multiple groups playing at the same time.

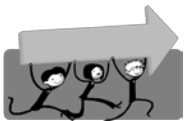
### Timing:

10 to 45 minutes

### Typical Goals:

Activity Skills	Life Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hand-eye coordination skills</li><li>• Agility skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Problem solving</li><li>• Helping team members</li><li>• Working as a team to achieve goals</li><li>• Developing strategies</li></ul>

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## Facilitation Instructions

### Materials:

- Beach ball
- Stopwatch (optional)

### Setting up the Activity:

Invite the group to stand in a small circle.

### Introducing the Activity:

Explain to participants the following goals and rules:

1. *Your goal is to hit the ball at least 20 times in a row without the ball hitting the ground.*
2. *You may use any part of your body to hit the ball.*

3. *No one on the team may hit the ball 2 times in a row.*
4. *Everyone on the team must hit the ball at least once.*

Then, give participants the beach ball and let them begin to experiment and play. If they achieve 20 hits with the ball, then you can raise the goal to a higher number.

### **Special Safety Considerations:**

Participants may try to hit or kick the ball at the same time, which could result in collisions or injuries. A participant may try to save the ball from hitting the ground which could also result in injury.

### **Questions for the Group:**

1. What kind of strategies did you use to achieve your goal?
2. Was it okay to make a mistake in this activity? How did the group treat teammates who made mistakes?
3. Was there ever any conflict between team members about who should hit the ball? How did you resolve that conflict?
4. Do you now feel more or less confident about your team's abilities to achieve challenging goals? Why or why not?

### **Additional Facilitator Notes:**

- It can be fun to encourage the participants to count the number of hits out loud. This adds to the energy of the activity.

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### **Other Ways to Play the Activity:**

- This game can also be played for time, instead of number of hits. For example, you can challenge the group to keep the ball in the air for 30 or 60 seconds.
- Another variation involves challenging the team get 20 hits, but no one can hit the ball a second time until everyone has hit it once. With this variation they have to figure out how to line up to make sure that everyone hits the ball in a certain order - a more challenging version of the same game.
- You can also create certain restrictions on the type of hits you allow. For example, they can only use their arms, or only their feet, or only their feet and heads.