

READY~SET~GO

TIPS FOR

TRANSITIONS



THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING WAY

READY: Kids are getting ready to move to another activity; "Wait times" (bubblers, bathroom)

- Avoid waiting
- Be prepared
- Get the kids' help
- Give five-minute warnings

SET: Kids ready and waiting for activity; circle times and gatherings; unexpected wait time

- Stick to your schedule
- Make five-minute warnings and cleanup a regular part of transitions
- Put group time activities on your schedule
- Involve kids in leading group time

GO: Kids are on the MOVE; walking down halls; moving from one activity to another.

- Avoid lines
- Determine acceptable noise levels
- Face the kids
- Be silly
- Provide variety

THE KEY TO SMOOTH TRANSITIONS IS TO BE PREPARED!

CROSSED AND UNCROSSED

Children learn about the importance of observing body language when they try to replicate a pattern established by the leader.

Preparation/materials needed:
Two dowels, sticks, or pencils

Do:

Sit together in a circle with the children. Begin this puzzle by asking a child to pass you two sticks (or whatever two items you choose). Then pass the sticks to the child sitting next to you. Tell the group, "I got these sticks crossed, and I'm passing them crossed." Cross your legs as you receive the sticks and pass them along. Do not tell the group that this is what you are doing. Indicate to the group that each person is to receive the sticks and then pass them on either crossed or uncrossed. As they do this, they should state both how they received the sticks and how they are being passed (crossed or uncrossed). The "key" to this puzzle is the leg position of the person doing the passing and the leg position of the person to whom they are being passed. For example, the person receiving the pencils says, "I am getting these pencils crossed." (Are the passer's legs crossed or uncrossed?) "I am passing them on uncrossed." (Are the receiver's legs crossed or uncrossed?) Tell each passer if they are correct or incorrect in the passing. As the group passes the sticks, hopefully some will catch on and answer correctly. If they do not, when the sticks come to you again, obviously cross your legs as you pass the sticks on. That should do the trick.

Reflect:

Briefly explain the premise of the activity. Ask the students how they were able to discover the pattern. How did it feel not to know the pattern? Did you give up trying to find the pattern when you couldn't get it in the first few tries?

Apply:

What have you learned about your observation skills today? How attuned to body language are you?

YURT CIRCLE

This is a higher level activity —make sure your group knows and trusts each other before trying this activity!

Group must depend on each other to avoid falling over while leaning back and forth!

Preparation/materials needed:

Just enough space for the group to form a large circle!

Do:

Have your group form a circle while standing. Group members should be close to arms length apart. Have group members hold hands with a very firm grip that would be difficult to break. Slowly, every other group member will lean forward, while the other half of the group leans back. Then, those leaning forward will start to lean back, while those leaning back will lean forward. They must totally depend on the hands they are holding to support them so they won't fall on their face or on their back! Only when EVERYONE is safely standing straight up on their own can you let go of hands.

Reflect:

Ask the group what was accomplished. It might be hard to see, so give them time and maybe a few hints! What would have happened if one person would have let go? How did we rely on each other? How can we relate this activity to our group dynamic?

Apply:

Group members have to rely on each other. If one person "lets go" it affects the rest of the group, and the group can "fall." This activity can also help build trust among group members.

WHO'S BOB

A good time-filler, it's fun, and kids like it!

Preparation/materials needed:

Space for a group circle and a spot where the "detective" can hide so he or she cannot see the group.

Do:

Have the group form a circle (standing). One person in the circle will be Bob. Bob will do an action that the rest of the group must imitate. The catch is that there is a Detective who will be in the middle of the circle trying to figure out who Bob is. Designate one person to be the Detective and have that person stand away from the group so they cannot see what is going on, but can still hear the group. Then designate one person to be the first Bob. Have Bob start the action and the group follow before the Detective is called back. Once the action has been started call the Detective back in by saying "Hey, Detective!" or "Detective, Detective!" Bob may change actions as many times as he or she likes; in fact, the game won't work unless Bob changes actions somewhat frequently. Once the Detective has successfully guessed who Bob is, the old Bob is now the new Detective, and the old Detective chooses a new Bob. It works best if group members do not stare at Bob while the actions are going on. This kind of gives Bob away!

Source:

Crossways Camping Ministries

TELEPHONE

Group practices listening skills in a fun way!

Preparation/materials needed:
Nothing, just a group!

Do:

Have the group form a single-file line and turn to they are now standing shoulder to shoulder. They can either stand or sit for this activity. As the leader, you should be the first person to start the game with a catchy phrase. Think of a phrase (it can be anything---appropriate of course!!!) and whisper it into the ear of the person next to you. They can say “operator” if they don’t understand, and you can repeat the phrase, but ONLY ONE TIME!!! By the end of the line the phrase will most likely be completely different. Have the person on the end say the phrase they heard aloud. It will be funny, no doubt, so laugh! Let other group members have the change to send a phrase down the line.

Reflect:

Ask the group what they just did. What was difficult about the activity? What would have made it easier? Did the phrases change a lot, or not so much? Did they change less as the activity went on? What can we learn from this?

Apply:

For groups to work together they need to practice good listening skills! As everyone saw in the game, things can get mixed up pretty easily, and groups need to work together and listen to make sure that doesn’t happen!

Source:
Crossways Camping Ministries

HUMAN KNOT

Group works together to untangle themselves after getting into a big knot made of people!

Preparation/materials needed:
Nada, just a little bit of space!

Do:

Have the group form a circle. This activity works best with groups of 8-14 people. You might want to split up your larger groups into two or three groups, depending on the size. Make sure you have an even number of people, otherwise it will not work! (As the leader, you might have to join in the fun in order to get an even number of participants. Never ask a group member to sit out just to make the numbers work!!) After you have formed a circle, have everyone put their right hand into the middle of the circle and grab the hand of another person. Note: you cannot grab the hand of the people next to you! Then have everyone put their left hand into the circle and grab another hand. Note: you cannot grab the left hand of the person who’s right hand you already have!! And of course you still cannot grab the hand of someone next to you. Now you are set, so untangle yourselves! Basic rules: no letting go of hands in order to “cheat!!” (However, “re-gripping” is often necessary, and this is okay!!)

Reflect:

After your group is finished with the activity, re-group and reflect. Were you successful? What worked? What made things more difficult? How did you solve this problem? How does this bring your group closer together?

Apply:

Groups are forced to work together in a very close setting! They can’t hide from each other, they must face this “problem” and solve it together, or else it won’t work. It’s a wonderful way to get a group to work together and bond.

Source:
Crossways Camping Ministries

LINE ‘EM UP

Group works together to accomplish assigned task.

Preparation/materials needed:
Tape to make a thick line on the floor

Do:

Have the group line up on the strip of tape. Tell them that they are going to have to rearrange themselves in a certain order without stepping off the tape. Orders might include height, age, shirt color, etc. For younger groups it may work better if you simply have them line up and do not include the tape, as they might have enough work on their hands without those limits. Try “muting” members of the group, or the entire group, if they need an extra challenge. You can also blindfold some members, but only if you have spotters present!!!

Reflect:

Ask them what they just did. What was it like? What was difficult? Easy? If muting occurred, how did that affect the group and the process? Blindfolding? If the tape was used, how did that affect things? Did one person take control? Were there any times when people were confused about what was going on? What could have made things easier or go more smoothly?

Apply:

You might explain to the group that when working together not everyone will have the same abilities as others---just like some people could not talk, and some could not see. We need to adjust and cooperate so that everyone can participate to their fullest ability, because some people may be able to offer things that others cannot.

Source:
“Duct Tape and Light Bulbs”

IMPULSE

Group discovers how important each member of the group is in order for the group to accomplish something.

Preparation/materials needed:
Space large enough for the group to form a circle

Do:

Have the group form a circle and hold hands. Tell them that they are going to send an impulse around the circle by squeezing the hand of the person next to you. Start by squeezing one of the hands you are holding onto and have the impulse go around. Once it goes around once, time the group, and try to beat some records!

Reflect:

How successful was the impulse? When was the impulse successful? When was it not successful? What would have happened if one person had not participated? What can we learn about this? What does this have to do with working together?

Apply:

It is essential for group members to know that each and every member is important and needed in the group! If even one member was missing the whole activity would change, and may not work at all.

Source:
Adventures in Peacemaking

HAVE YOU EVER?

This game is a way of bringing group members closer together by having them learn about each other and experience something together.

Preparation/materials needed:
Enough chairs for the group.

Do:

Set up chairs in a circle. The leader will stand in the middle (No chair for the leader!) and explain to the group that the person in the middle will say something that applies to he/she, such as "Have you ever been to the zoo?" Everyone who has been to the zoo will get up and find a new chair to sit in. It can't be the chair next to you! There will be one person left in the middle. Make sure the leader starts out the game!

Reflect:

Ask them if they feel as though they know each other better after playing the game. Did they pay attention to who was getting up for each question? If you think they paid somewhat close attention, maybe ask them some questions about who did what. (This means you have to pay attention, too!)

Apply:

It helps groups work together when they know each other and are comfortable with each other. This activity helps them do that. Let them know it is important to learn about each other because this will bring the group together more!

Source:
Crossways Camping Ministries

CATCH YOUR EYE

A fun way to "break the ice" and get a group laughing together.

Preparation/materials needed:
Just some space for the group to form a circle!

Do:

Have the group form a standing circle. Everyone will look at one another's shoes and find one pair to focus on. When the leader says so, everyone will look up at the eyes of the person wearing the shoes they found. If two people make eye contact, they must scream (AHHH!!) and sit down. (Obviously more than two people can do this at a time, you might have several pairs sit down after one round.) Once there are only two people left, start it all over again! (See, it wouldn't work for just two people to do this—hel-lo. Although you could keep going if you so desired!) It is just a fun way to get a group to play together and break the ice.

Reflect:

As the leader, try and figure out how this activity might have brought the group closer together. Sometimes games as simple and trivial as this one can make a lot of difference.

Apply:

Groups need stuff to bond over, give them something!

BOPPITY-BOP-BOP-BOP

A group mixer! Great for breaking the ice and for fun as well.

Preparation/materials needed:
Space for group circle.

Do:

Once the group has formed a circle, explain the game. One person will be in the middle (the Bopper) and will go to people in the circle and say "Boppity-bop-bop-bop!" The person they are talking to must say "Bop" before the Bopper finishes saying "Boppity-bop-bop-bop," or else they are the new Bopper. The Bopper can also just say "Bop." If they do so, the person they're talking to CANNOT say "bop." If they do, they are the new Bopper. Once the group has this down, add a few new calls to the game. "Jello": the person the Bopper is facing must put their hands together above their head and "jiggle like jello" while the people to the right and the left must join hands around the person to be the bowl. (THIS MUST BE DONE BEFORE THE BOPPER COUNTS TO A CERTAIN NUMBER, OR ELSE THE PERSON THE BOPPER IS FACING IS THE NEW BOPPER!!) "Elephant": Person makes the elephant trunk with their arms while the people next to them make ears. "Fire hydrant": person puts hands together above their head and people to their side imitate dogs relieving themselves. There are many more, get creative!!

Source:
Crossways Camping Ministries

Things to do while waiting in line.....

Practice math facts (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division)...i like to use flash cardsPractice spelling words.....

....**Have the kids spell words one letter at a time (for the word summer, one would say S, the next U, the next M, etc.)....**Sing silly songs :)

.....*Have them silently rearrange*

themselves into birthday order (NO

TALKING) or height order or whatever

other order you want.....Share

highs and lows of the day so

far....Play telephone... ..

Share "brags and bummers"

from the day (good things and

bad things).....*Play Simon*

***Says*.....**

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