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**Icebreakers & Games**  
**Compiled by:**  
**University of Illinois Extension**  
**Youth Development Team Members**

**Sampled & Shared at:**  
**November 2004 Team Meeting**

## From Candie Glover

**Who Am I???:** Place a nametag (sticky) on the back of each individual with a character or object on it. You could go with any theme - fruit, cartoons, plants, etc... Individuals are only permitted to ask yes and no questions. The goal is to guess what or who you are without cheating! Everyone is a winner and earns a prize once they complete the game.

**Please Sign!:** Everyone gets a sheet of paper with 10-20 questions on it. The goal is to go around and get to know one another by having them sign their names by something that relates to them. For example: Have you ever been out of the country? Do you have red hair? Find someone that is an only child. This game can have a time limit on it. The one with the most signatures wins a prize.

**Skits:** Divide the group (any size group) into smaller teams (ranging anywhere from 4-12). Give them a time frame (10 - 20 minutes) to come up with a skit. Each team then presents their skit and introduces themselves to the group. Skits are always fun - they get us laughing and talking together.

**Commercials:** This works just like the skits do - except - you provide each team with an item. Each team needs to come up with a 60-second commercial to sell the product. The items may range. The goofier the item, the better.

## From Diane Baker

**Chicken Hit:** Everyone sits in a circle in the floor with legs in the middle like the spokes on a wheel. One person stands in the middle with a chicken. Someone starts by calling the name of someone else in the circle. The chicken-hitter tries to hit (actually “tap”) the feet of the called person's name before they call someone else. If hit before calling a name, they are the new chicken-hitter. The old chicken hitter must then say a new name to start things rolling before they sit down on the ground, otherwise they are automatically back in.

**Discuss:**

- What was your reaction to this activity?
- What did you need to know or do to succeed at this activity?
- Why is it important to know names of other people?
- When is another time that knowing someone's name will be important?

## From Carolyn Ashton

**Have you ever...?** Participants form a circle and put a piece of masking tape down in front of them. One person should stand in the middle of the circle without any tape. The person in the middle will say: Have you ever...(crashed your car, eaten a whole box of cookies in one sitting, cheated on a test...) and then the people in the circle who have done the thing that the center person says will have to leave their spot and run to another spot that is vacated by someone who is also trying to find a new spot to stand. Only rule is the runners cannot switch to their next door neighbors spot.

**My Name Is...and I like to...(with action)** – 1<sup>st</sup> person says their name and acts out the corresponding thing they like to do, and then the 2<sup>nd</sup> person repeats 1<sup>st</sup> persons name and acts out 1<sup>st</sup> persons action, and then says their name and acts out the thing they like to do...and so on, and so on... until you've gone around the entire circle and repeat everyone's name and action – good memory game.

**Who Am I?** Cartoon Characters – Create the names of Cartoon Characters (or movie stars, or musical artists, etc.) and put them on sheets of paper and tape them onto people's backs so that they cannot see which character they are. Participants then have to guess which character they are by asking "yes" and "no" questions.

**Icebreaker Interviews:** Pick a partner and do a quick interview with them and report back to the group: 1. Name: One unique thing about the person, One thing they have in common, the person's favorite movie, the person's favorite book, the person's favorite food.

**Shoe Race** – everyone takes off their shoes and puts in pile, divide into two teams, and one person from each team goes and runs to pile, puts on their shoes, and runs back and tags next person, who gets their shoes and so, on...

## From Ruth Ann Vokac

### **Mixer for 4-H Moderator Training**

Tell participants to think about their most valued possession. Remind them that possessions are not other people. Examples might be a necklace, baseball glove, horse, etc. Ask them to write their name and valued possession in one or two words on a card provided.

Collect the cards and tape one on the back of each participant. Make sure everyone has a card that is not his/her own. Now tell them to mingle and ask only "Yes" / "No" questions as they try to guess the word(s) on their backs.

After a set time limit or after everyone has guessed his/her word, collect the cards and then quickly ask each person to share in a sentence or two why he/she chose the possession.

## From Kia-Rai Pittman

**Going Fishing:** Participants have to figure out what 2 items they can bring with them on their fishing trip. If they don't figure it out they can't go on the trip. Participants say their first and last name and then say what two items they will bring. The key is they must bring items that have the same beginning initials of their first and last name. I.E. "My name is Kia-Rai Pittman and I will bring a kite and a pillow with me." Some people catch on right away while others may take longer. Its usually fun with kids.

## From Sherry Fulton

This activity was done with Dr. Swain at the East Central Regional "Communication and Team-work" workshop. I did this activity with the DeWitt County 4-H Federation:

4-5 people per group. Each group was given the following items: pipe cleaner, paper, tooth-picks, string and tape. Each group was asked to construct a shelter out of the items given to them. The shelter had to withstand a direct hit from three tennis balls coming at it from above.

Dr. Swain stressed the importance of working together to accomplish a similar goal, so I stressed this with our Federation, as we start a new 4-H year.

## From Steve Wagoner

### **Four-of-a-Kind**

**Supplies:** One 8" x 10" white poster board with the outline of a smaller black frame placed about an inch from the outside edges of the poster board is given to each group of four people along with colored markers. **Room Set Up:** Each group of four needs to work together around the poster board either at tables or on the floor.

### ***Directions:***

- Divide the large group into small groups of four people each.
- Give each small group a white poster board with an inside black frame and at least one colored marker.
- The small groups of four identify through discussion four ways all four members are alike—searching for similarities that are NOT obvious.
- Each small group writes words or draws things that represent the four similarities in the middle of the black frame.
- Each small group member then identifies one way they are different from the other three group members—again looking for differences that are NOT obvious.
- Each person writes their first name and their difference on one outside edge of the poster board.
- Each small group then reports to the larger group the similarities and differences they identified in the activity.

***Processing Questions:***

1. Are all the people in this group the same?
2. Are there any similarities within the group?
3. What are some broad categories of difference between people in this group?
4. Why is it important for us to understand how we are different AND similar from other people?
5. How can we utilize differences and similarities to make our group more effective?
6. How can we celebrate differences in our group while also highlighting similarities?

**Tower Building**

***Supplies:*** Each team is given a manila envelop of equal supplies that consists of one letter sized piece of cardboard stock, various sizes and weights of paper, three plastic straws, three pipe cleaners, and tape of equal amounts.

***Room Set Up:*** Group members need to work in small teams of three to five participants each to build their towers—table or floor space and chairs to gather around their structures are needed.

***Directions:***

- Tell the large group they are going to participate in an activity on the leadership skill called **managing**—during the activity, they have the opportunity to practice managing resources in groups while working together on a team project.
- Divide the large group into small teams of three to five participants each.
- Give each small group a large envelop of supplies to build a tower.
- The teams' goal is to work together within their small groups to build the tallest tower possible with available resources.
- With the exception of attaching their structures to a sturdy surface such as a table top or a floor, the towers must be free standing.
- Give each team ten minutes to construct their tower.
- For the next ten minutes, the teams build their towers.
- Encourage them to utilize all of the resources they are given and to involve all group members in the building process.
- When time is called, teams stop construction and prepare to discuss the experience just completed.

***Processing Questions:***

1. How did each team decide to build their tower the way they did?
2. Were there any changes in the design of their tower that greatly changed the height of it?
3. What roles did team members play in the process?
4. How did teams resolve conflict or disagreement in the process?
5. What lessons about making group decisions can be learned from this activity? What about working together on a team for a common goal?
6. What could be done differently within each team to build taller towers next time?

## From Sally Hamlin

### Insiders/Outsiders

Objective: to provide a demonstration of the satisfaction of being included in a group and the uneasiness of being excluded from a group. You will need 15 or more students.

Supplies: Prepare a series of short messages and make 5-6 copies of each. The messages can relate to the topics or themes being discussed in class. Make single copies of 1-5 other messages. Place each message in an individual unmarked envelope. Seal them and mix them up.

What to do: Instruct students to open the envelopes, read the message and circulate around the room and repeat the message softly. Tell them to continue this search staying in growing clusters until they are all experiencing the feeling of belonging to a group. When all but the loners are in their groups of five or six, act surprised and lead them in the following discussion.

Discussion may include: How does it feel to not be accepted into a group? Does this ever happen at school? Is it intentional? In what other situations might this occur? How did it feel to find someone with the same message? Why did not those people in a group reach out to the excluded persons? How do groups prevent us from including others? What can we do to include others? What lessons does this have for team building?

Source: Even More Games Trainers Play, Scannell and Newstrom, 1994. Page 327

### Surviving on Your Own: Home Alone

This activity goes well with a babysitting clinic or any kind of safety lesson. I developed for the Home Alone program in McDonough County. The idea is from the *Survivor* reality TV show. Youth are "Challenged" to survive at Home Alone. This usually follows a lesson in home safety.

Divide youth into teams. This is highly competitive. Youth will need to be monitored through each section. Make sure everyone completes each part. If there is a large group you might even want to do heats. There is a large amount of room needed to do this. A gym of large area is best.

1. Walk the Line
2. Find Your Key
3. Plumbing Leak
4. Broken Glass
5. Find your way out of Fire

1. Your challenge is to survive at Home Alone. First, you must **Walk the Line** from school to home with no problems. (Tape is stuck to floor in a zigzag pattern. Youth must walk on the line. IF they fall off, they go back to the beginning.)

2. Find your Key. You have arrived home alone and cannot **Find your Key**. Where is the spare one hidden for emergencies? (A tub full of crinkled paper, one has a printed key on it. Youth must search through the tub and find the key.)
3. Plumbing Leak. You get inside and find that there is a **Plumbing Leak**. The dripping must be stopped. (Youth stand over a milk jug or other receptacle and drop four paper clips from waist high into the jug. When all clips are in the jug, they can move to the next location.)
4. Broken Glass. You finally can relax and have a snack. Oops, you dropped a glass and there is **Broken Glass** everywhere. (Youth must sweep up (use small dustpans and confetti paper) the broken glass. They have to put on plastic gloves first. There cannot be one piece of paper left. Youth take off gloves and go to next station.)
5. Find your way out of the Fire. The smoke alarm is ringing. You must get out of the house. However, smoke is quickly filling the room and you can hardly see or breathe. **Find Your Way Out of the Fire!** (Youth puts on blindfold and picks up a spoon with a tennis ball on it. Youth must walk 5-10 feet with the ball on the spoon blindfolded through the smoke to get out of the house safely.)

## **From LeAnn Million**

**5 Finger Contract:** I use a version of this contract before all my teambuilding workshops.

All fingers and thumb: We are a GROUP, with individual goals (thumb) and group goals (fingers). Both need to be respected to have the best function of the group.

First finger: SAFETY FIRST (first finger up). Part of safety is LISTENING (first finger to ear) to the leader, each other and yourself.

Middle finger: NO DISCOUNTING others (shield middle finger with other hand), nor yourself (shield middle finger from self).

Ring finger: (finger up) The ring finger represents a commitment to SUPPORT each other. One way to support one another is to be willing to give and receive feedback, and be willing to change.

Little finger: (finger up) The little finger represents TAKING APPROPRIATE RISKS. This finger is the weakest and could easily be harmed if it was working without the support of the rest.

Have everyone shake their hands, as if shaking off water: LET IT GO! We can't solve every problem, nor resolve every conflict. We can accept that some things don't reach a conclusion while we are together, and we can decide to move on.

Clap or Razz-Ma-Tazz hands over head: When we keep our commitment to the contract, we have plenty of FUN!

**Toe Fencing (from More New Games—New Games Foundation):** To play, we face each other, holding hands. Then we try to tap the tops of each other's toes with our own. When one of us scores three hits, its time to switch to a new partner. The frenzy generated by Toe Fencing places a premium on the honest self-refereeing—the name of the game is NOT Toe Stomping. Players should be equally armed—barefeet to barefeet, sneakers to sneakers, moccasins to moccasins—and we do not advise playing in steel-toed boots or six-inch spike heels unless everyone is equipped with shin guards.

**Triangle Tag (from Silver Bullets—Karl Rohnke):** [A hand-held triangular game for four people. Use this as a quickie warm up activity. ] Ask your group to quad-up in groups of four (I know its superfluous, but...) and ask three of the participants to hold hands forming a triangle. One member of the triangle is the person designated to be caught, and the other two are blockers or protectors. The fourth person is IT and must try to tag the designated odd person in the triangle. The IT can run around the triangle and try to jump across the triangle, but cannot purposefully try to break a grip. The triangle personnel dance and jump about in semi-coordinated moves to keep IT at bay. Change roles in a clockwise direction every 60 seconds or when a catch is made. (Or, never change positions and play the same rules every day for two weeks to measure your classes' potential for civil disobedience.)

**LeAnn's note on Toe Fencing & Triangle Tag:** I have the couples or triangles grasp arms at the elbows instead of simply holding hands. Seems to steady the group. Combine these two icebreakers and everyone will be moving and laughing!

## From Tina Veal

**The "Ha" Game.** Everybody lays down zig zag on the floor/ground with one person laying down first, next person puts head on top of his belly and so forth. The game is---first person says "HA" the next person adds a "HA" and says "Ha, Ha", they so on for the rest of the line. This game could be played in teams of five or more, boys against girls, younger against older. Then try other words like: HEE, Ho, Hi. Try the words "Toy Boat". You will find "Toy Boat" is ridiculous. But--it is guaranteed to be hilarious.

**The Group Game.** This game is great if you need to find out information about a group. Everybody stands. The leader gives directions to form groups: boys/girls, projects, age, school district, going to camp/not going to camp, Membership cards turned in, email address/web site, grade, FUN---favorite ice cream, movie, amusement ride, shoe color/size, hair color, favorite sport/team, food like/dislike, etc.

**ALPHABET BODIES - Managing Others:** Participants need to be in groups of five. The facilitator will call out a letter in the alphabet. Participants have to form a letter by laying on the ground and shaping a letter with their bodies. The fastest group to form the letter wins. Other option: switch group members after 3 or 4 letters so the groups will have the opportunity to meet different people.

**TALE TOSS - Communication:** Everyone stands in a circle. Select a small object that can be tossed easily from one player to another. Toss the object to a player in the circle. The person catching the object must begin to tell a story- something made up on the spot. The player holding the object tosses it to another player who must catch it and continue the story. The story can take any form, as long as it is connected to the last player's contribution. Players must continue the flow of the story no matter how fast the object is passed.

**FOLLOW THE LEADER - Decision Making:** The person is chosen as "it" and leaves the area while the rest of the group designates a leader. Players then sit in a circle and go through a series of motions. "It" stands in the middle and tries to discover who the group leader is. All players follow the leader's motions: clapping, itching, stamping feet, pounding legs, waving, etc being careful not to watch the leader directly. When "it" correctly guesses the leader, a new "it" is chosen, a new leader is designated, and the game continues.

**DUCKS AND COWS - Working With Groups:** Have all players stand in a large circle at least an arms length apart. Have everyone close their eyes tight and hold their right index finger up to shoulder height. The game leader(s) then go around the circle and whisper either "duck" or "cow" in each player's ear. As soon as the player is given his "duck" or "cow" he puts his hand down, still keeping his eyes shut. When all players have been named, they are instructed to find the rest of their "species" or fellow "ducks" and "cow" by making the sound of the animal they represent. Remember to keep eyes closed and the area safe and clear of hazards. The group that finds all of its "ducks" or "cows" wins. You must not be able to hear your animal's call outside of the group you are forming.

**ISLANDS - Managing Others:** Similar to musical chairs. When either the music or clapping stops, players must touch an island- either a frisbee, a piece of plastic, wood, marker, etc. When touching an island players are not allowed to touch one another. Each time the music or clapping starts, another island is removed. The ultimate goal is to have 30 players touching one island without touching each other.

**STATIONARY VOLLEYBALL -Getting Along With Others:** Players may sit or kneel on the floor within reach of one another so the entire court can be covered without the players moving. Use a rope tied between two chairs. For a ball use a beach ball, balloon, or other ball. Both teams call the number of times the ball crosses over the net. Both teams share the final score. A score of 15 is average, 25 is good, 35 is excellent.

**CLOVER- Understanding Self:** Design your own personal clover, answer questions, and share with others your ideas.

**MAKE A DATE:** Give each participant a paper plate. Have them draw the face of a clock on their plate with a line next to each number (no digitals!). Then have participants walk around and find a "date" for each hour, writing their name by the hour. The catch is, no one can make a "date" with more than one person per hour. After everyone has made their dates, speed up time and allow 1-3 minutes for each hour. The facilitator then asks a question for discussion on each date. The pairs will have a chance to get to know one another.

# From Amy Bunselmeyer

## Elephant, Palm Tree, Monkey

*Setup:* Players stand in a circle, close enough to touch the person next to them without straining.

*Play:* One person is “it” and stands in the center. “It” points to a different player and calls out “elephant,” “palm tree,” or “monkey.” For “elephant,” the person pointed at crosses their arms out in front of them forming a trunk, while the players to each side cup their arms toward the center person, forming large ears. For “Palm Tree,” the person pointed at raises their arms straight up, while the players to the side do a hula dance. For “Monkey,” the center person holds his nose and puffs out his cheeks. The players to the right and left scratch their armpits.

After calling out a position, “it” watches to see who the last person is to respond correctly. That person becomes “it” and trades places with the person in the center. If everyone responds at the same time, play continues and “it” points at another person and calls “elephant”, “palm tree” or “monkey” again.

*Another option:* Person in the center stays “it” the entire game. When someone is called “out”, instead of becoming “it”, they are out of the game. The last one three to be in are the winners.

## Question Mixer

*Setup:* Make enough copies of the question cards so that everyone in the group has one. Stand the group in two lines facing each other, about arms length apart. Everyone should be across from a partner.

*Play:* When the Facilitator says “go” the partners should take turns asking each other the questions on their cards. Both partners should answer both questions. When the facilitator says “Switch”, the partners should switch cards. The line on the right should rotate over one person with the person on the end rotating to the left line to face their new partner. The person on the opposite end of the left line should join the right line. When the facilitator says “go”, the partners should ask each other their new questions.

Continue playing until your time limit for play is up, or everyone has talked with everyone else in the group.

*Another option:* Do not put the group in lines but allow them to mix up around the room to find their own partners.

*Possible Questions:*

- If you could describe yourself as a flavor of ice cream, what would you be and why?
- If you could be a building in the State of Illinois, what building would you be and why?
- If you could travel anyplace in the world, where would you go, and why?
- If you could be a professional sports star, what sport would you play?
- If you could give your parents one gift, what gift would you give them?

- If you could go on a date with anyone, who would you go out with?
- If you were dying and had one last meal, what would you eat?
- Who makes the best French fries?
- Who is your favorite President and why?
- Are you a morning person or a night person? What time did you wake up this morning?
- What is your favorite book, and why?
- What is your favorite restaurant and why?
- How many students will be in your graduating class? How many people live in your town?
- If you had to work at Disney World, what job would you have?
- If you could be anyone in the world for one day, who would you be?
- If you died tomorrow, what would you like people to remember about you?
- What is your favorite flavor jelly bean? Do you just eat them, or do you separate by flavor first?
- If you could have a super power, what power would you have and why?
- If you could travel to any era of history, where would you go, and why?

## **From Cathy Deppe**

(Cathy has a whole booklet she has compiled —this is just a sampling from it)

**Team on a T-shirt:** The objective of the game is to get everyone on the team standing on the T-shirt for at least ten seconds (or long enough to sing a chorus of Row-Row-Row Your Boat). All feet should be off the floor!

**Bean Shake:** Give each player a bag or envelope containing 10 dried beans. The participants then begin to introduce themselves to others by shaking hands. The player gives a bean to every fifth person he/she meets. The object is to get rid of all of your beans . . . which is hard to do because you are always accumulating new beans!

**Ice Cubes:** Each team (2-3 people) gets an ice cube. The object is to work as a team to melt their ice cube first. The only rules are that the ice cube must not touch the ground and all members of the team must touch the ice cube during the game.

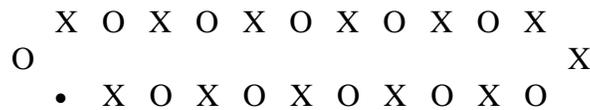
**Cookie Tower:** Divide the group into two or more teams. Choose a captain from each team, preferably a person with balancing ability and the power to restrain from laughing. Each team has a supply of cookies. Within one minute, the team members must stack their cookies, one on top of the other, on the captain's forehead. The team with the most cookies stacked wins.

**Scrabble:** Each player is given a card with one letter of the alphabet on it. At a signal, everyone mingles until the leader shouts "SCRABBLE!" Everyone then has to scramble to become part of a word made of the letters they are carrying. Ask that they form no less than three letter words.

**Incorporations:** This game is about forming and reforming groups as quickly as possible. Don't worry if you are not even into the first group by the time the next group is called, just head to the next group. The idea is to meet many different groups of people as fast as possible. Get into groups of three...Go!

- A group of five with everyone having the same eye color as you.
- With the same last digit in their phone number as yours.
- Wearing the same size shoe as you.
- Find everyone else born in the same month as you.
- Think of the first vowel in your first name, find four other people with the same vowel.

**Balloon Burst:** Divide your group into two teams and pick a captain for each. Arrange them as diagrammed below. Players must stay seated and using only one hand try to hit the balloon in the direction of their captain, who will then burst the balloon with a pin. One point is scored for each balloon burst. When one balloon is burst the leader will place another balloon in the center of the row for play to continue.



## From Judy Taylor

### Telephone Pictionary

**Materials needed:** paper and pencil for each person; a sketch of something; it may be helpful to have the group sit along the side of a table.

**Directions:** Direct the group to form a line. Explain the procedure to the group. Hand the sketch to the first person in each group. That individual tries to draw the same item or sketch. They pass their sketch to the next, etc. Each person is only allowed to see the sketch that was drawn immediately before they received it. They are not allowed to see any of the previous sketches. When the last person has drawn the item you compare it with the original. This could be done with 2 or more groups to introduce competition of finishing first as well as getting the drawing correct.

### Discussion:

- Does the picture drawn by the last person look like the original?
- Why might it not look the same?
- How are the results of this game similar (or different) from the “telephone” game?
- What in our lives mirrors (is similar to) this?

## From Peggy Hampton

**Jumbled words charade** -- Write out words and cut them into single letters, giving the same number to each letter of a given word. Pass these letters out and have the players get together with the others in their particular groups. The players try to discover first what the word is and then they are to act it out for the others to guess. For example all of the number "ones" get together and find that they have eight letters as follows: L, L, B, S, E, A, A, B. They put their letters down and take a look at them. Someone might suggest to the group that the word is "Baseball". This is correct, therefore they then act it out for the entire group. You can make up the words to relate to the activities/event you are doing.

## From Johnna Jennings (Johnna has a whole booklet developed, too!)

**Odd Bean:** Each player receives 12 beans in a small bag. Opening his/her bag of beans, one player-let's say Sam-puts a few beans in one fist, stretches it out toward another player and asks, "Odds or evens?" If the other players - guesses correctly that Gregory's closed fist has an odd number of beans in it, she collects those beans. If she guesses wrong, she has to turn over that many beans to Gregory. The object, of course, is to collect all the beans. When you want to stop playing, the winner is the one with the most beans.

**Balloon Football:** Have participants line up in two rows of chairs facing each other. (Rows should have 3-4 feet between them. Have individuals sit on one of their hands. Using a balloon and or multiple balloons, toss them between the two rows. The row/team that hits the balloon over the opposing rows back earns a point. This can be played to any determined score. As the group goes more balloons can be added to increase the challenge and the fun.

**Knee to Knee:** Form two rows of chairs facing each other. Have participants sit in chairs. Read statement and ask that each talk about the statement for not more than 1 minute. Have everyone move one seat to their left. (see below for possible questions) Approximately 10 - 15 minutes. Possible questions to be asked:

1. Who is the man most relevant to our lives?
2. What is the title of the last book that you read?
3. What is the best movie that you have ever seen?
4. What is the most beautiful thing about people?
5. What physical thing do you want to build more than anything else?
6. What are three things you like most about yourself.
7. What is the ugliest thing you know?
8. What leisure time activity pleases you the most?
9. What event of the last three months stands out in your mind the most?
10. On what basis do you select your friends?
11. What is the greatest problem in the United States?
12. What is the best regular program on television?

## From Judy Schumacher

**Hoop Pass:** Have the group form a circle holding hands. Have 2 people break their grip and rejoin through the center of a hula-hoop. At “go” the group must pass the hoop around the circle as fast as they can without breaking their grips until the hoop is back where it started. Time how long it takes and try to break your own record. When the group has mastered passing one hoop, add a second hula-hoop to the circle passing in the opposite direction as the first. Eventually the hoops will have to by-pass each other.

**Blind Square:** In a large, cleared space ask the group to form a circle and put on blindfolds. Give them a 75-150 foot piece of rope (any rope, clothesline, etc. will work). Ask each person to grab hold of the rope and keep at least one hand on the rope at all times. Ask the group to form a perfect square (other shapes can also be used – triangle, octagon, etc.). When they believe the task is accomplished they are to stand in position and remove their blindfolds.

**Raging River :** This team building activity requires you to work together to get your entire team across the “Raging River”. You are stranded on the far side of the shore (marked off by two long ropes) and the only way to safety is to cross the river using the four stepping stones (carpet squares). The only rule is that if any part of you touches the river, your whole team must start over. Also one of your team members is blind (blindfolded) and one cannot walk. You need to decide as a team how to get everyone on your team across the river as quickly as you can. Give as few rules as possible about how to cross because it allows teams to be more creative. The first team across wins.

**2B or KNOT 2B:** This is a good activity for building group consensus. A series of 4 independent rope rings are held together by a fifth rope ring (the more ropes used, the more difficult the activity). The ropes are laid on the floor in a manner in which it is difficult to tell which of the ropes is holding the others together. The group needs to decide as a whole which rope loop is holding together all the other rope loops, without touching any of the ropes. Once the group has come to a consensus, they may pick up the rope they choose to see if they are correct.

**Bull Ring:** The Bull Ring is made from a 1 ½ inch diameter metal ring (available at hardware stores) and several pieces of string or twine (7 – 9 work well). You will also need a tennis or golf ball and a small can. Each member of the group holds on to the end of one string. The group leader places a ball on the bull ring. The group then needs to get the ball into the can while only holding on to their end of the string.

**Human Chair:** Everyone stands in a circle shoulder to shoulder. Everyone then turns to the right so they are facing the back of the person in front of them. Have them shrink the circle so that everyone is touching the person in front of them. Put your hands on the shoulder of the person in front of you. On the count of three slowly sit down on the lap of the person behind you. You should focus on helping the person in front of you sit on your lap. As long as everyone is helping the person in front of him or her, then everyone should be supporting the weight of everyone else. It may not happen on the first try, but conveys quite the feeling of success once accomplished!

## From Dana Homan

**Wishes:** You will need liquid bubbles. Have members stand in a circle. One person stands in the center blowing bubbles as they:

- tell their wishes/hopes for a co-4-H'er
- say something positive about another member
- tell what they like/appreciate about another member
- congratulates another member on a recent accomplishment
- wish "happy birthday" to co-4-H'er
- etc.

Pass the bottle of bubbles around until each person has been in the center to express their "wishes" and something positive has been said about **every** member present. Leaders and parents should be included in this activity as well.

**Variations:** Do this activity at each club meeting sending "wishes" to 3 or 4 members per meeting. Have those members stand in the center of the circle. Have the remaining members pass the bubbles around as they send their "wishes" to those in the center of the circle. OR adapt as appropriate for your club.

## From Virginia Kuo

**Lycra Tubes:** Put 4 people "in" a tube. Number 1-4. As 1 & 3 lean back, 2 & 4 quickly trade places. Then 2 & 4 lean back while 1 & 3 trade places. See how quickly they can get going.

## From Kimberly Rahn

**Cotton Ball Races:** Participants are each given a cotton ball. They get down on their hands and knees and at the signal blow their cotton ball across the finish line the first one across wins.

*Variation:* You both sit at the table with straws in your mouths. All you have to do is pick up a cotton ball by sucking in your straw. Then pass the ball to your partner's straw without letting it drop. Your partner can then let the cotton balls drop in the bowl

**Heads Up!:** 1 balloon and 15 seconds time limit. Both players put their hands behind their backs. Now, using your heads only keep the balloon in the air while you walk across the room. If the balloon drops before you reach the other side of the room, go back and start again.

**Wild Wet and Wacky!:** You will need: 6 sponges, 1 bucket of water, 1 empty bucket. All you have to do is hold the empty bucket and catch the sponges your partner throws at you. Pretty simple---right? Of course you have to hold the bucket on your head to catch them. One more thing: the sponges have been soaking in the bucket of water.

## From Jessie Crews

**Balloon Mixer** - Have each participant write one thing on a small piece of paper that they think no one else will know about them. Roll it up, put it into an unblown-up balloon, blow the balloon up and tie it. Toss all the balloons into the center of the room and have everyone grab a balloon. Go around the room, have each person sit on their balloon, pop it, read the paper, and try to guess who it is. Lots of fun!!

**Electricity** - Our kids all time favorite game. Kids sit in two rows facing each other, hold hands, with their eyes closed except the first person in line. The first person watches to see if a flipped coin lands on heads or tails. If heads, they squeeze the hand of the person next to them and the last in line grabs the ball or can at the end of the lines. The winner goes to the head of the line. Exact directions are in the Polite is Right curriculum.

**Action Auction** - We use to generate a little fun at everything from Leader's Banquets to Achievement Night, Council Dinners etc. Divide group into teams and ask for a variety of items - person with most pictures in their wallet, biggest feet, best hog call, etc, etc, etc. Give points for either the best in each category. Always warms up a group.

**Four Corners** - Hang a piece of paper with a different number in each corner of the room (1 - 4). Gather the group in the middle and of the room and read a question giving them four choices - are you most like...summer - corner 1, winter - corner 2, spring - corner 3, or fall - corner 4; are you more like a ....potato, banana, bowl of spaghetti, or piece of bread; etc. After the question has been read, everyone goes to the corner of their choice and talks with someone else why they chose that corner.

Once everyone is in a corner roll a dice and whatever number it lands on is the "unlucky number." (Disregard # 5 & 6). Everyone in that corner is eliminated and must sit down. Continue until only a handful of people remain and declare them the winners.

## From Chris Anderson: Funny Names & Crossword Connection

## ***Funny Names***

Sometimes when you have a stressful day or week, you need some silliness to break up the day. Here is your dose. Follow the instructions to find your funny name. The following is an excerpt from a children’s book, “Captain Underpants and the Perilous Plot of Professor Poopyants”, by Dave Pilkey.

***The evil Professor forces everyone to assume new names. Lest we take ourselves too seriously, take a moment to find your new name and wear it with humor for the day!***

<p>Use the <b>THIRD</b> letter of your <i>first name</i> to determine your <b>NEW</b> first name:</p> <p>A = doofus          B = lumpy          C = buttercup          F = greasy          G = fluffy          H = cheeseball          I = chim-chim          J = poopsie          K = flunky          L = booger          M = pinky          N = zippy          O = goober          P = stinky          Q = slimy          R = loopy          S = snotty          T = falafel          U = dorkey          V = squeezit          W = oprah          X = skipper          Y = dinky          Z = zsa-zsa</p>	<p>Use the <b>SECOND</b> letter of your <i>last name</i> to determine the first half of your <b>NEW</b> last name:</p> <p>A = diaper          B = toilet          C = giggle          D = bubble          E = girdle          F = barf          G = lizard          H = waffle          I = cootie          J = monkey          K = potty          L = liver          M = banana          N = rhino          O = burger          P = hamster          Q = toad          R = gizzard          S = pizza          T = gerbil          U = chicken          V = pickle          W = chuckle          X = tofu          Y = gorilla          Z = stinker</p>	<p>Use the <b>FOURTH</b> letter of your <i>last name</i> to determine the second half of your <b>NEW</b> last name:</p> <p>A = head          B = mouth          C = face          F = breath          G = pants          H = shorts          I = lips          J = Honker          K = butt          L = brain          M = tushie          N = chunks          O = hiney          P = biscuits          Q = toes          R = buns          S = fanny          T = sniffer          U = sprinkles          V = kisser          W = squirt          X = humperdinck          Y = brains          Z = juice</p>
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Thus, for example, George W. Bush’s new name is Goober Chickenshorts.

Your new first name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your new last name: \_\_\_\_\_