

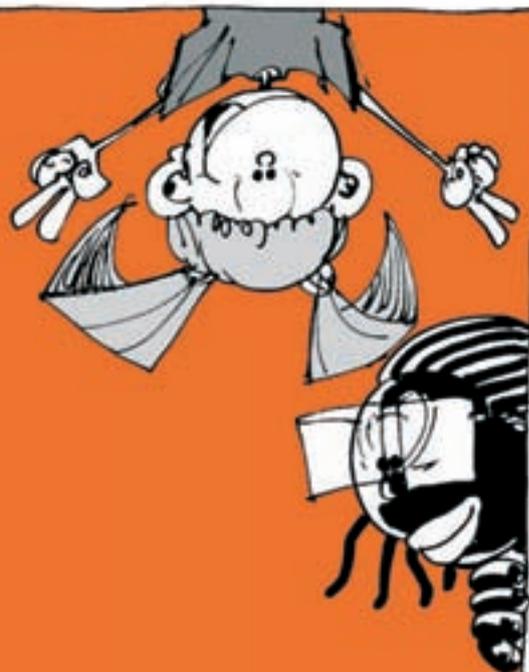


Terre des hommes

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# LAUGH, RUN AND MOVE TO DEVELOP TOGETHER

GAMES WITH A  
PSYCHOSOCIAL AIM



I. INTRODUCTION  
AND MAKING  
CONTACT



II. TRUST AND  
COMMUNICATION



III. COOPERATION



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## a) ORIGINS OF THE MANUAL

This manual came into being following a project initiated in 2005 at Terre des hommes, called “Movement, Games and Sport for children’s psychosocial development”. This project began in the United Nations year dedicated to Sport and Physical Education, with the idea of supporting initiatives to use sport as a tool for education, development and for the promotion of peace.

Terre des hommes put in place a pilot project aimed at training sports teachers and animators in Movement, Games and Sport as a psychosocial tool, integrated into the already existing psychosocial projects in the field. This took place in two stages of three months each, in Iran and Colombia, firstly in a post-emergency situation (natural catastrophe) and secondly in

the context of the armed conflict and displaced population in Colombia.

The pilot project consisted of three main phases:

- A training phase to develop a common intervention model and to experiment it. Two weeks covering both the psychosocial side and the methodology of sport activities and games. The specific themes were the following: person’s fundamental needs, resilience, management of emotions, attachment theory, grief process, perception, communication and conflict management, as well as planning and methodology for sports and games, competition and cooperation and the role of the animator.
- A coaching and follow-up phase to help participants put their newly acquired skills into practice in activities with children.

- A replication phase with the creation of resource groups to transfer the new knowledge amongst their colleague animators.

The aim of this pilot project was to develop the personal, social, methodological and technical skills of the animators, in order to improve the quality of intervention with children.

Throughout the training, we used sport and games both as a support and as a tool to ultimately develop the personal and social skills of the children.

This manual, a compilation of twenty games, is not trying to be yet another games manual numbering and describing sport activities to be done with children for recreation. The idea is to provide those in charge of children a play tool which integrates the psychosocial approach and uses the phases of learning by experience.

## **b) PSYCHOSOCIAL APPROACH**

By psychosocial we mean the direct relationship which exists between psychological and social, each influencing the other mutually and continually. In effect, both are constructed through integration on two levels:

1. the psychological components: mind, thoughts, emotions, feelings and behaviour;
2. the social components: social context in which we live, environment, culture, traditions, spirituality, relationships with the immediate and extended family, community, school and professional activities.

We have separated the basic needs for psychosocial well-being of a child into three areas, all three being dependent and yet distinct in the way they are met.

- Individual needs: personal development, assertion of the identity, personal recognition;
- Social needs: groups of belonging, social recognition;
- Existential needs: religion, beliefs, meaning in life;

The psychosocial well-being of a child develops by stimulating his or her capacity to realise his full potential through the three fundamental needs: individual, social and existential. Both these “invisible” needs as well as material needs for food and shelter must be regularly met. It is important not to forget them, even, and especially, in situations which can sometimes prevent the individual from developing his potential for a long or short period of time (natural disaster, poverty, famine, war, trauma, etc.)

Psychosocial intervention seeks to stimulate the child’s development:

- The desire **to be** (identity) by meeting individual needs. These are linked to their need for love, recognition, security and protection. Stimulation of this emotional axis (unconditional) helps to build the child’s confidence and self-esteem.
- The desire **to do** by meeting social needs. These are the needs for limits, rules, requirements, order, authority, etc. Stimulation of this normative axis (conditional) helps to bring out social skills such as cooperating, developing knowledge, managing frustration, understanding the law and learning a job.
- The desire **to live** by meeting existential needs. These are linked to the need for recognition of a project in life, understanding the meaning of life, their role in the world. Stimulation of this axis of meaning (belief) helps to develop a feeling of belonging and their responsibility to transmit universal values.

These three dimensions form the essential psychosocial nutrients for the development of a child's well-being. Projects must be built on the basis of these needs. Consolidating them as quickly as possible after a disaster will facilitate the child's return to normal development. It is a question of giving back to the children their desire to live, to do and to be in spite of the crises they encounter.

Based on the ideas of the humanist A. Maslow, who considers each person as actor of his own life capable of making choices and taking initiative, we believe that a child is capable of developing resources and therefore his own well-being, if he is accompanied by adults who know how to give the appropriate psychosocial support. Caring for the psychosocial well-being of children is a key investment in human capital. It reinforces all other processes for the development and stability of societies.

## **c) PLAYFUL APPROACH**

Games form an integral part of a child's universe and are necessary for their physical and psychological development. Games can be purely recreational as well as precious tools for learning social relations.

There are different game classifications. We have chosen a universal one from a cultural point of view, that comes from genetic psychology. Also used by ERM<sup>1</sup>, the classification divides games into four categories, namely:

- Exercise games: which allow movement and simple manipulation (rattles, sound games, etc.)
- Symbolic games: which allow to make-believe and imitate; role play, theatre (dolls, toy cars, animals, doctors, etc.)
- Assembly games: which allow the child to combine elements; construction (jigsaws, Lego, etc.)

- Rule games: which initiate the child to rules and following instructions (logical reasoning, working out strategies, etc.)

All these games can be free. (i.e. the children themselves choose the category of game that interests them and the time that they want to play it without the presence of an adult) or organised (i.e. by an animator, educator, teacher, etc.). The ideal is to find a balance between the two.

This manual concentrates on the latter category of games, Rule games which require the children to follow instructions, to respect rules and to work out strategies. All games use the body and senses. In order for the child to learn, these games need the presence of an adult to guide them. The following pages are thus addressed to anybody looking after children, in whatever situation. We use these activities and games with children who have undergone traumas linked to natural disasters, domestic violence and conflicts in order to help them fulfil their

psychosocial needs. It is clear however that these games are useful to any child in any context, to help to develop their psychosocial skills.

These activities are a powerful tool because they engage the child as a whole:

- a. the **head** is in command because they need to think, consider strategies and make quick decisions;
- b. the **body** is moving, the senses are stimulated;
- c. the **heart** is central in controlling emotions and in applying fundamental values.

After experimenting in the field, 20 games and activities were selected, each with the potential to develop the three elements above: mental, physical and emotional:

a. Each activity or game engages the child to develop his intellectual capacity.

We tend to consider physical and sport activities as purely centred on the physical, forgetting that mental capacities are also essential to any activity using the body, from simple games to the most complex team game.

- Ability to concentrate, to observe, to anticipate, etc.
- Ability to think, to put a strategy in place, to make a decision, etc.

b. Each activity involves movement which develops physical abilities<sup>2</sup>:

- Physical: flexibility / strength / endurance / resistance / speed
- Coordination: orientation / reaction / differentiation / rhythm / balance

These categories are suggested by movement specialists who, following

research, determined five main coordination skills as well as five physical skills. From a physical point of view, the overall balanced development of a child depends on practicing movements as varied as possible, training coordination skills - the basis of all sports - as well as specific physical skills, without stressing one more than any other.

c. Each activity helps to develop psychosocial skills which can lead to better management of emotions and social relations, and thus better cooperation between children.

- Personal skills: self-esteem, enthusiasm, creativity, responsibility, honesty, determination, etc.
- Social skills: trust in others, respect, empathy, communication, commitment, cooperation, etc.

These skills can be developed through games based either on competition or on cooperation. It is useless to set them against each other since one is

complementary to the other. We know that our world is focused on competition and that children spontaneously put themselves in competitive situations whether healthy or unhealthy. However, it is a fact that children learn better in collaborative situations than alone.

What we want to illustrate through this manual is that adults in charge of activities need to encourage situations where the children cooperate, because it will teach them to respect each other and to work together. It is therefore our responsibility as adults to find the balance between competition and cooperation.

A cooperative activity or game has the following principles:

- Everyone has fun;
- The activity or game has a motivating objective;
- Everybody needs each other to reach the objective;
- Everyone is accepted and valued for their abilities;

- There is no judgement or criticism;
- Everyone participates actively;
- Everyone experiences success;
- Nobody is excluded or eliminated from the game;
- Nobody is made to stand out;
- Everyone is responsible for himself and for the group.

The ability to cooperate requires strong knowledge of oneself and of the other; confidence in oneself and in the other person, as well as good communication (observation, listening and expression) with the other.

These aspects of making contact, trust, communication and cooperation are used as heads of chapters in this manual.

*The simple fact of taking part into these games will not lead the child to develop the skills mentioned. An animator needs strong personal and social skills as well as the support of a good methodology.*

## 2. ANIMATORS SKILLS

### a) PERSONAL SKILLS

- Recognize, understand and control emotions and their impact on others.
- Be self-confident, assert oneself and be trustworthy.
- Adapt to difficult or changing situations and be open when facing differences.
- Evaluate oneself and learn from experiences.

### b) SOCIAL SKILLS

- Lead a group towards an objective, be enthusiastic and communicative
- Motivate children by providing constructive feedback.
- Maintain an emotional bond with the children while at the same time setting clear rules and boundaries.

- Empathize, recognise and respond to the needs of all the children.
- Manage conflicts in a positive way (without exclusion or non-constructive punishment) and make the child responsible for resolving his or her own problems.

### c) METHODOLOGICAL SKILLS

- Plan an activity taking into account variables such as intensity, time and materials.
- Set clear objectives adapted to the group and which develop mental, physical and psychosocial skills
- Guide children to reach the set objective (i.e. final form of a game, competition, race, etc.) through progressive steps and structured exercises.
- Make children participate so that they are always active (no waiting).
- Alternate moments of experimenting, discussing and correcting so that they can learn.

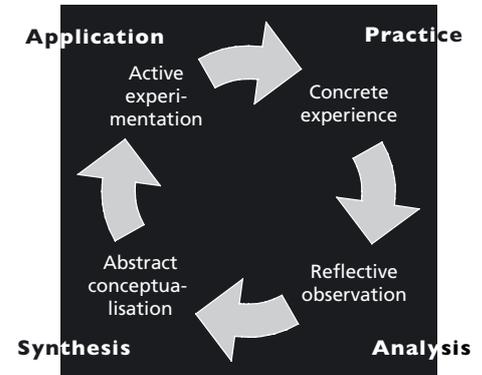
- Create a variety of exercises so that children remain motivated (not too long or too short).
- Encourage cooperative situations that build relationships between children.
- Ensure safe conditions in all circumstances to avoid accidents and violence.

### d) TECHNICAL SKILLS

- Have a good physical condition and have knowledge of own strengths and limits.
- Know the rules of the games and teach them to children so that they can also referee.
- Master a sufficient number of games and sports adapted for the target group.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

The suggested methodology is inspired by a “learning through experience” approach. A certain number of scientists and practitioners<sup>3</sup> have reflected on the process of learning and Kolb has come up with the following concept in four steps:



We believe that learning can only take place through experience followed by reflection. If the animator's objective is to emphasise the recreational side of

the game, then he will guide it in a classic way, by giving instructions and then letting children play so that they enjoy themselves and let off steam. However, if the animator's aim is to emphasise a particular learning, he will use another methodology, which integrates and brings out the three levels: mental (head), physical (body) and emotional (heart).

For learning to take place, there needs to be a concrete experience, followed by verbal reflection which takes place in a moment of discussion or correction. In practice, the game is broken up into four key stages, which follow the concept explained above, in a continuous cycle:

- a.** First experimentation of the game (practical);
- b.** Stop for discussion and corrections (analysis of what happened and synthesis of improvements to be made);

**c.** Second experimentation (application and improvement);

**d.** Stop for feedback (acknowledgement of improvements).

a. First experimentation: after giving instructions (clear and concise), the children discover and try out the game.

b. Discussion and corrections: after enough time playing, the animator stops the game, brings the children together in a circle and asks them what they found difficult and how they can improve the quality of the game. Suggestions are given for precise corrections and improvements. The animator highlights important points corresponding to the objectives (such as honesty, better communication, etc.) and starts the game again.

c. Second experimentation: the children try out the game a second time, more consciously this time because they have been made aware of certain important elements. This is when the

learning takes place and the quality of the game improves.

d. Feedback: the children talk about this second experience and their learning falls into place. The animator pays attention to what happened during the game in terms of relationships and discusses what he saw through questions and answers.

These pauses for feedback can take place as often as necessary or over several days, until the set objective is achieved and the sought after behaviour is obtained. Repetition of the same activity or game is never boring for children; it is in fact a key part of the learning process. The objective must be precise and the game must be adapted to the children's level (progress and variation of the game).

This methodology requires the animator to remain external to the game. Keeping a distance, observing how the game unfolds and identifying behaviours will allow the animator to provide relevant and focused feedback.

# 4. USE OF THE MANUAL

## a) CLASSIFICATION OF GAMES

The twenty activities and games are divided into three main chapters. The order within each chapter is random and does not represent any ideal order to follow during a session. The liveliest games are in chapter I.

### I. Introduction and making contact

1. Names and gestures
2. Name throwing (and variation)
3. Postman (and variation)
4. Witches
5. Snake
6. Chain tag
7. Two's company, three's a crowd

### II. Trust and communication

8. Blind man and guide-dog
9. Wooden board

10. Little blind train
11. Person to person
12. Mirror (and variation)
13. Stop and go

### III. Cooperation

14. Sitting/standing circle
15. Magical hoop
16. Standing in order
17. Animal mimes
18. Mad machine
19. Shark island
20. Five pass ball (and variation)

## b) EXPLANATION OF GAME DESCRIPTIONS

### General informations

We have decided not to indicate number of players, duration of the game or necessary equipment for each game as these vary very little from game to game. In fact, for all these activities, the ideal number of participants is approximately 20 people (minimum 6, maximum 30). It is up to the animator

to foresee, test and adapt to the environment. For example, in certain contexts, particularly for the games involving physical contact, the animator may choose to separate girls and boys.

Most of the games do not need any equipment, apart from a clearly defined area. When equipment is necessary for the game, it is mentioned in the description of how to play.

The duration of the games are generally between 10 and 20-30 minutes (or more), including the four stages that are the explanation, the game itself, the discussions and feedback.

The only indication we give is the age of the players. We have divided this into three categories: 6 years and up, 9 years and up and 12 years and up. Again, it is up to the animator to evaluate the abilities of the group.

## **Play**

The game is described in a simple manner and should be possible to play without any practice. It can still be useful however to try it out with a small group before playing it in a larger group. The better the animator knows the games, the better he will be able to guide them pleasantly and effectively.

## **Objectives**

Objectives always have two aspects focusing on psychosocial and physical competences. These are listed in order to help the animator achieve the objective with the group at a given moment.

## **Recommendations**

Some practical advice is provided relevant to the particular game. The advice has come up following experiments carried out in the field and in different situations.

## **Discussion**

For all correction and feedback, whether during or at the end of the game, it is important to gather the children in a circle, fairly close, preferably in the shade and away from distractions. Even if children may seem reticent at first, this moment will rapidly become a ritual and a privileged space for talking and expressing emotions.

Some fundamental questions that the animator can ask are:

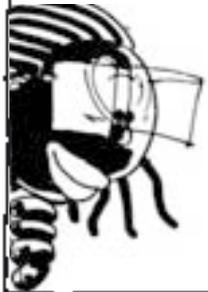
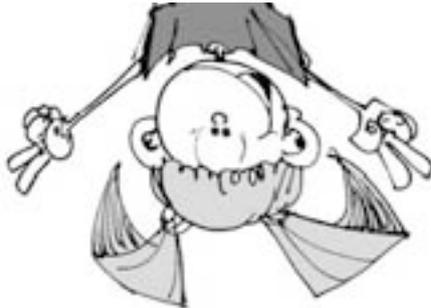
- Were there any difficult moments in the game? Can you explain the reason?
- What helped you reach the objective? What did not help?
- Which attitudes helped or hindered the smooth running of the game? Please describe.
- What have you learnt about yourself or others? Please describe.
- How did you feel during the game? Can you explain the reason?

Other questions that are specific to a game are suggested at the end of each activity. There will always be unexpected situations that the animator will need to handle with tact and pertinence.

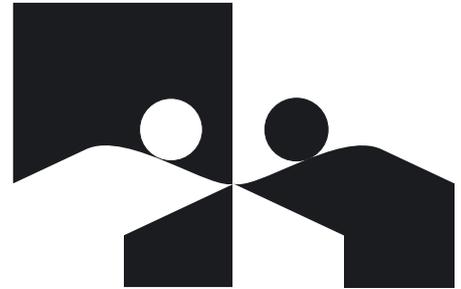




**WE WISH YOU A LOT OF FUN  
AND LEARNING  
WITH THESE 20 GAMES**



# I. INTRODUCTION AND MAKING CONTACT (1 to 7)



# 1. NAMES AND GESTURES

## PLAY

The group is standing in a circle with space between each player. The animator says his own first name while making a gesture to identify himself. The others watch carefully and, when he has finished, repeat the gesture, all at the same time, while repeating the name with the same intonation. The next person says his or her own name with a different gesture from the first person, and the others repeat it. And so on until everyone has said their name with a gesture.

## OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to develop **self-expression** through movement and creativity to express one's identity through a specific gesture. Each personality can be asserted and differentiated from the other. **Self-confidence** is also developed in this game because each

A creative activity to learn names in a group that does not know each other, or a ritual to begin a session in order to consolidate relations in a

fun and creative way through names and gestures.

person exposes himself alone. The other aspect of this activity is the group's ability to **observe** and **copy**.

Physical: nothing particular, apart from making **precise movements**.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

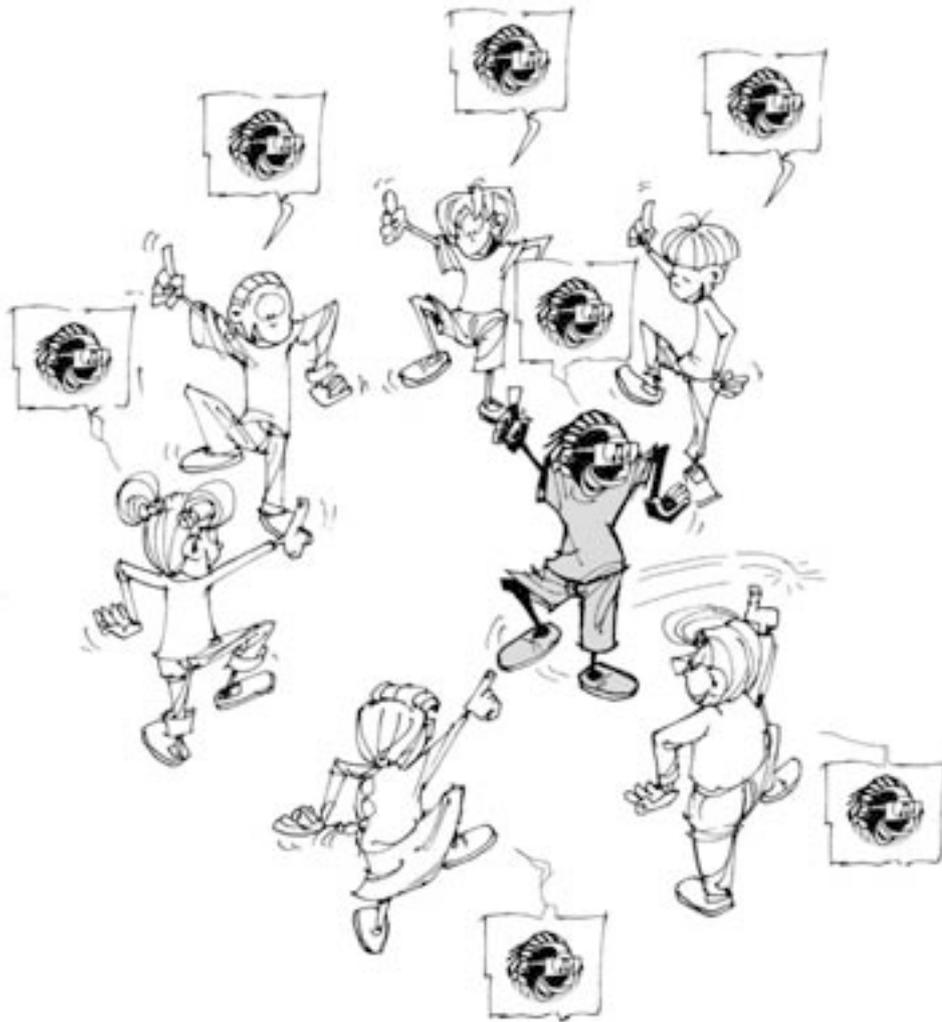
Children playing this game for the first time will probably feel uncomfortable expressing themselves with their body while saying their name out loud. It is up to the animator to encourage them so that they get over their shyness. Children also have a tendency to copy the previous player's gesture. Insist on the unique aspect of the personality and that each gesture must therefore be unique.

It is often necessary to have a second round insisting that each player use their creativity and make clear gestures.

This activity can be done several

times, at several sessions with the same group of children. It is also possible to vary the type of gestures: animals, professions, etc.

With older children, 9 years and up, one can be more demanding in the gesture and imitation of it.



## 6 years and older



### **DISCUSSION**

- Was it difficult to think of a gesture for yourself that is different from the others? Can you explain?
- How did you feel when everyone copied your gesture while saying your name in unison?
- Is it difficult to copy exactly what the others do? Can you explain?
- Can you learn new things about your friends with this game? How?
- Can you think of other gestures, other criteria than the personality? Which?
- Etc.

## 2. NAME THROWING

### PLAY

For this game you will need several balls. A group of minimum six to twelve people stand in a circle with at least 1 metre between each player. Player A holds the ball, calls the name of player B and then throws the ball to him. Player B calls someone else and throws the ball and so on.

As soon as everyone understands the principle and knows the names, one or two balls can be added, depending on the size of the group.

Progression: by adding running to the game it becomes more difficult but also more motivating. After calling player B and throwing the ball to him, player A “follows” the ball and runs to B’s place. B does the same after calling and throwing the ball to C, etc.

By making the circle bigger and/or increasing the number of players the game becomes more challenging.

An ideal game for learning names by using movement. Also useful as a ritual for beginning a session, to recreate bonds in the group and to warm

up before exercises which are more physically demanding.

### OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to develop concentration as well as good **communication** (observation, listening) and **cooperation** in the group.

Physical: to work on **reactions**, differentiation (different actions: calling, throwing, catching, running) and **precise passes**. The bigger the circle the more the physical ability is challenged and refined.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The game helps to develop a number of skills simultaneously and the animator needs to concentrate on some of them. Firstly, the sequence of actions. There is a tendency to throw the ball first and say the name afterwards. The animator needs to insist on the order of the three stages (call, throw and catch) before adding more balls or adding running.

Then it can be useful to work on communication by reminding players of the importance and the difficulty of good communication which requires the willingness and responsibility of both people. If the ball is dropped, each is 50% responsible, both the player who perhaps threw it badly and the player who perhaps caught it badly. Children easily tend to accuse the other person, forgetting their own responsibility. If A calls B, who then concentrates on catching the ball, and then A throws the ball properly, the conditions are in place for everything to work.

Often, specific children are not or rarely called and therefore do not touch the ball. The animator could then give the group a mission: the game will end when each player has touched the ball X times. This rule gives the game an aspect of cooperation, for it obliges the players to have a strategy in order to involve all of them.

# 9 years and older



## DISCUSSION

- What do we need for the game to be lively and to work well?
- Does it help to do a parallel with communication? Can you explain?
- Was it easy to remember who had already had the ball? How did you do?
- Was it difficult to find a strategy for the cooperative mission? Can you explain?
- Did you prefer playing in a small or large group? Can you explain?
- Etc.

## Variation: Named ball/broom

9 years and older

This game is very similar to the previous one, for it also works with names, developing reactions, speed and cooperation.

The players stand in a circle. Player A is in the middle with the ball. He calls player B by his name, throws the ball in the air and moves towards B's place. B has to run into the middle to catch the ball before it bounces X times. The game can be made more or less difficult by not allowing the ball to bounce or by increasing the numbers of bounces.

The same can be done with a long stick, a broom or anything similar. Player A holds the broom in the middle of the circle, calls player B, lets go of the broom and moves out of the way while B runs to catch it before it touches the ground.

Advice: the players can control the difficulty of the game by the way they throw the ball: the higher, the easier. In the same way, the bigger the circle, the more difficult the game.

The animator must remind the group that the game is a group game and not an individual game. The aim is to find a balance between a throw that is impossible to catch and those that are too easy, which deprives the game of all interest and motivation. It is also possible to add a group mission here: the game is over when the group has managed to catch the ball/broom X number of times without dropping it.



# 3. POSTMAN

An ideal game for a group getting to know each other in an energetic and playful way.

## PLAY

For this game it is necessary to set out a small space for each person (except the postman) such as a chair (or something to sit on), a hoop, rope or circle drawn on the ground with chalk, etc.

The players sit on their chairs in a circle (or stands in their hoop, chalk circles, etc.). One player, the postman, stands in the centre. He says clearly: "The mail is here." The other players ask: "Who for?" The postman answers: "For everybody who..." and he invents something: "... has a brother, everybody who has been to Paris, everybody who wears glasses, everybody who likes playing soccer, etc." Everybody who "receives a letter" has to get up and switch places as quickly as possible. At the same time, the postman has to try to find a place for

himself. Whoever is left without a seat is the new postman and brings the next letter, for "everybody who..."

### Rules:

- You cannot change places with a neighbour;
- You must run to change place (speed - reaction);
- You must not stay seated if the "letter" is for you (honesty);
- You must not touch (collide with) other players (respect – non violence);
- You must not bring the same letter twice (concentration and creative thought).

Progression: to make the game more difficult (without chairs), use an imaginative starting position. The players can stand (or crouch) in the hoop with their backs to the centre. This increases concentration and reactivity.

## OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to develop **concentration** (listening), **creative thought**, **respect** (non-violence) and **honesty**.

Physical: to work on **reaction**, running **speed** and agility.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The first time, the animator can play the role of the postman to help the children understand the game. Letters must be adapted for the age of the children. They can focus on superficial criteria such as appearance for younger children, or more personal criteria such as beliefs, personality, tastes, etc. for older children.

The animator must insist on the liveliness of the game and ensure that the rules are respected. He makes sure that the postman is not always the same person (if necessary adding the rule: no more than 3x postman, for

example), and that each child is the postman at least once.

Call attention to aspects of security: the players tend to be very enthusiastic and “throw themselves” at chairs

without paying attention to others... Beware of the risks of collisions and falling.



## 9 years and older



### DISCUSSION

- Did you learn something new about any of your companions? What?
- Did you like being the postman? Can you explain?
- Was it difficult to think of ideas for letters?
- Did certain questions bother you? Can you explain?
- Were you always honest or did you pretend not to have to change seat at times? Can you explain?
- Etc.

## Variation: Fruit basket

6 years and older

The “fruit basket” is the same idea as the “postman” game, but an easier version for younger children. The game begins with the same number of chairs as players and the animator stands in the middle.

Each player is given the name of a fruit that they keep secret. The animator knows the names of the fruit – four or more depending on the number of players. He is in the centre, the market, and asks for: “a kilo of... apples / oranges / mangos / etc.” and those “fruits” have to change places as quickly as possible. The animator can also ask for a fruit salad and then all the players have to change places!

Instead of fruit, the children can invent any criteria: animals, colours, nature, etc.



## 4. WITCHES

### PLAY

This game requires a fairly large area which is clearly defined and known by the players.

In the beginning the players (minimum eight) are standing in a circle and the animator gives the following instructions:

There are witches and honest citizens in the game. The aim for the witches is to bewitch all the citizens by simply touching them. The bewitched citizens must then stand still. The aim for the citizens is to escape from the witches and free the bewitched citizens by hugging them. The game ends when all the citizens are caught bewitched.

Rules: no running and no talking, everything takes place in silence.

The animator moves round the group, standing in circle, eyes closed, and chooses the witches (approx. one for every five players) by touching them

An excellent game for getting started playfully. Special chase game, in silence, with walking instead of running and with the introduction of

physical contacts requiring a certain level of trust between players.

discretely on the back. Everyone opens their eyes and the game can begin.

### OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to develop **respect** and **trust** through physical contact, as well as **honesty** and responsibility. To increase **cooperation** and **strategic thought** on two levels: between the witches and between the citizens.

Physical: everything happens at a fast walking pace which requires quick **reactions** and changes of direction.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The animator must make sure that the game space is respected and that players stay within the limited area. He must also remind them of the rules: no running, no talking.

Children tend to accuse others of hav-

ing run or spoken, instead of taking responsibility for being honest in the game. The animator is there to remind them that everyone is personally responsible for sticking to the rules. For example: anyone who has been touched must stand still, anyone who goes outside the limits or starts running is automatically bewitched and stands still without being told so.

It is not easy for children not to run, but this gives the game a different energy from normal tag games: the fact that they are walking gives them more time to observe and think of group strategies (witches or citizens), by communicating non-verbally.

It is useful to stop the game fairly quickly to ask the children what strategies they are using; if they are playing individually (trying not to be caught) or as a group (freeing friends). Insisting on cooperation is essential to the smooth running of the game.

Physical contact can be difficult for some children (hugging is not easy, especially for pre-adolescents). In this case ask the children to find another

way (creatively) to free bewitched citizens (e.g. crawling under their open legs). However, remember that the idea of hugging is part of building

## 9 years and older



relations and confidence. A freed citizen can also thank whoever hugged him for putting him back in the game.

### DISCUSSION

- Was it difficult not to run or talk? Can you explain?
- Was it easy to be honest all the time? Can you explain?
- What strategies did the witches use? And the citizens?
- Was it difficult to give friends a hug to free them? Was that physical contact nice or unpleasant? Can you explain?
- Did you choose the people who you wanted to free? Can you explain?
- Etc.



# 5. SNAKE

A simple and short game, ideal for letting off steam and having fun while being in a group.

## PLAY

The players are divided in groups of five, standing one behind the other and holding on to the person in front either by the shoulders or the hips to make a snake. The player at the front is the head and the one at the back is the tail. The objective is for the head to catch the tail by running, without any player letting go of the one in front. The snake must never separate. Once the head has managed to touch the tail it changes position and goes to the back, at the snake's tail. And so on until each person in the group has been in every position.

## OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to develop harmony in a group. The players have to **cooperate** to stay physically and mentally linked, while maintaining rapid movement.

The physical contact encourages them to **respect** other's bodies.

Physical: to coordinate the movements while increasing **speed** and **reaction** time (changes of direction).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Children like this game a lot, but it can quickly degenerate if the animator doesn't ensure a non-violent setting. In their rush, children can hold each other roughly, tend to let go very quickly and fall easily. This does not work towards the objective of the game. The animator is there to remind the objective: harmony and cooperation in the group. For security, tell them not to hang onto each other's clothes, but onto their shoulders or hips, and to start slowly.

The snake's head is responsible for not losing the body and may need to adapt his movements for the others.

The tail must avoid the head without letting go of the body. Those in the middle have a role which requires them to trust their friends.

It is very important to change positions so that everyone can experience the different responsibilities.

There is no point in starting the game with large groups (more than five players), because it becomes too difficult. But once the children have got the hang of the game, the longer the snake, the more motivating the game.



## 6 years and older



### **DISCUSSION**

- Which position did you like best? Can you explain?
- What helped you to succeed? What didn't help?
- Was the physical contact difficult? Violent? Nice?
- Is it easier being a long snake? Can you explain?
- Etc.

## 6. CHAIN TAG

Classic tag game with an element of cooperation. Ideal for changing the group's mind set and letting off steam.

### PLAY

One or more players are designated as chasers (approx. one for every five players). Their aim is to catch the other players as quickly as possible within a clearly defined area. As soon as a player has been touched he becomes a chaser too. The new pair of chasers holds onto each other and can't let go. When they catch a third player, the chase continues in threesome, still without letting go. When they catch a fourth player the two pairs separate and continue chasing.

Once the chasers have found strategies to chase, the number of chasers that stay linked together can be increased up to six players who can then separate into two threesomes, or eight divided into four and four. The difficulty can increase until all the players are joined in one long chain. If the chasers let go of each other, the

animator can introduce a penalty, such as hopping instead of running for 30 seconds or anything else, but without exclusion....

### OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to develop **cooperative strategies** and learn to **respect** each other through careful physical contact. Physical: to improve the coordination of their movements, as well as their **reaction** (changes of direction) and **speed**.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

This game is very easy and lively and it introduces the notion of cooperation in a simple way. Having to run in pairs or threesomes makes the children move from working as individuals to working in a group. To succeed, the chasers need to agree on a strategy

and thus have to communicate.

The chasers in the same group tend to aim for different victims by pulling their companions in opposite directions. They inevitably let go. The animator needs to remind the children of the aim of the game which is to take the others into consideration and stay linked all the time. He can give them some time to find a new way of holding on to each other (holding hands, linking arms, arms round each other's waist).

The children also need to be reminded to be honest and accept to join the chain of chasers when they are touched.

# 6 years and older



## DISCUSSION

- Did you like running together? Can you explain?
- Was it easy or difficult? Can you explain?
- What strategies did you use to cooperate? Did you collaborate with other chains?
- Was there a strategy amongst the victims to escape from the chasers?
- Etc.



## 7. TWO'S COMPANY, THREE'S A CROWD

A lively and motivating game of chase-tag which can be played with different stages of difficulty as well as individually or strategically.

### PLAY

The players stand in pairs, side by side, scattered over a defined area. Two players are designated as the cat and mouse. The cat runs after the mouse who, to avoid being caught, places himself to one side of a pair. The player on the opposite side now becomes the mouse and runs away, until he finds shelter beside another pair, passing on his role to another player, and so on.

If the group is large, and to ensure participation of all players, better divide the group into two and assign two different areas, rather than adding another pair of cat and mouse which can get very confusing.

Progression: once everyone understands the game, it can be made more difficult by changing the positions of the pairs of players who are waiting:

sitting down, lying on their backs, lying on their bellies, etc.

The rules can also be changed: when the mouse goes into shelter beside a pair, the roles change and the player opposite becomes the cat and the cat becomes the mouse.

A second pair of cat and mouse can be added, making sure that the same cat always chases the same mouse to avoid confusion.

### OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to develop the ability for strategic observation, **anticipation** and decision-making, as well as **cooperation**.

Physical: to improve coordination, as well as **reactions** (changes of directions) and **speed**.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

This game is very lively and motivating as long as the animator reminds the players that everybody should be able to participate actively. The mouse may be selfish and want to stay mouse and run for as long as possible, forgetting that the other players are waiting.

The great objective of this game is the energy that can be created so that everyone remains alert. That is why cooperation is at its maximum when the mice pass on their role quickly.

In cases where the cat is slower than the mouse, the animator can suggest another rule: for example, the mouse must run on one foot, giving the cat an advantage, or vice-versa.

The animator should insist on the cooperative nature of the game, making sure that the mice work as a group "against" the cat. It is hereby essential that the mouse taking refuge beside a

pair does not think only of saving himself, but gives the possibility to the next mouse to escape. Finally, it is important to remind children about the importance of the

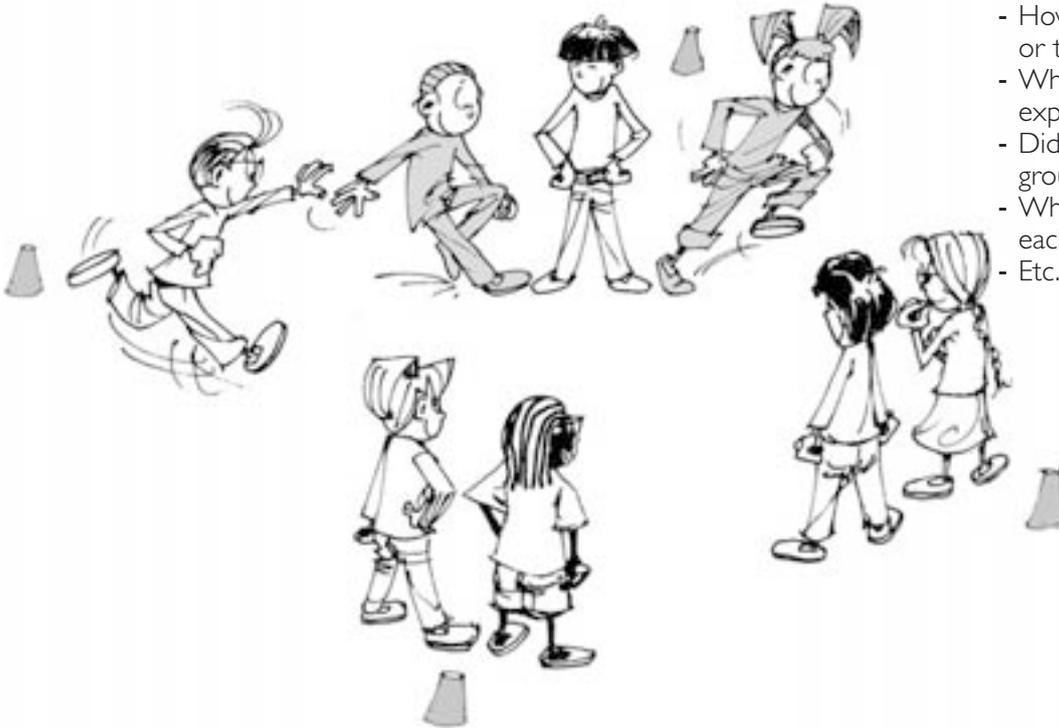
group, so that they do not always stop beside the same pairs. Observation is important to make sure that everyone has an equal chance of participating.

## 9 years and older



### DISCUSSION

- How many times were you the cat or the mouse?
- Which role did you prefer? Can you explain?
- Did you play for yourself or for the group?
- What strategy did you find to help each other as mice?
- Etc.





## II. TRUST AND COMMUNICATION (8 to 13)



## 8. BLIND MAN AND GUIDE-DOG

### PLAY

The animator defines an area (which can be smaller or larger for more of less difficulty) and makes sure the players are aware of the area. The game takes place in silence. The players choose a partner to make pairs, A and B. The aim is to move around confidently and responsibly.

A closes his eyes and plays the “blind person”, while B, with eyes open plays the “guide-dog”. It is up to the guide-dog to find the best way of leading their blind master in the determined space, without talking and avoiding the other pairs of players or any obstacles. Swap roles.

Progression: once a pair trusts each other, the animator has different possibilities, like adding obstacles to be avoided, reducing the space available, changing the pairs round, etc.

A calm activity ideal for a group that is getting to know each other and building relations, or for a group which lacks cohesion and respect.

### OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to create bonds, **trust** and **responsibility** between two people and in a group. To foster **respect** and concentration.

Physical: the blind person develops other senses instead of sight while walking more or less slowly.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Make sure that the players know that the game takes place in silence and that safety is very important. The pairs must not collide with each other. The aim is not to put them in situations where they will fail (too many obstacles or not enough space).

With children, there is often a lot of excitement and collisions the first time they play. Remind them that the aim, for the “blind” person, is to let go and trust their partner; and for the guide-

dog to be responsible for their partner; while giving them confidence.

It is useful to do this activity several times, at different sessions, because trust develops gradually.

# 9 years and older



## DISCUSSION

- How did the guide-dog work to win the trust of the blind person?
- Which was the easiest role? The most difficult? Can you explain?
- What is the best way of leading (holding) the blind person? Can you explain?
- Was it difficult to concentrate on your partner as well as the rest of the group? Can you explain?
- Etc.



# 9. WOODEN BOARD

A calm activity ideal for consolidating trust and mutual respect after “The blind man and his guide-dog”.

## PLAY

This activity takes place in several chronological phases. In total it requires between approximately 30 and 45 minutes depending on the size of the group. The last phase can be kept for a later session.

Ideally, the ground should be soft so that it is comfortable to lie down on (sand, carpet, grass...).

Scarves (or other clothing) can be used to blindfold the blind people.

**1.** (a) The players form pairs. Player A lies on the ground, as stiff as a board, while B checks the stiffness of the body by lifting an arm, a leg, both legs, etc. If A is really stiff, the whole body can be lifted, like a board. Swap roles.

(b) Still in pairs, this time A is totally relaxed. B checks by gently shaking each part of the body. Swap roles. It is important to feel the difference between a relaxed body and a still body.

**2.** (a) The participants form groups of three. Player B stands up, makes his body rigid, folds his arms across his chest and closes his eyes if he feels like it. He then lets himself fall, without moving his feet, forward towards player A and backwards towards player C who catch him by the shoulders very gently. Swap roles.

(b) The same exercise in groups of six. They stand in a circle with one player in the middle. This is more complex because falling sideways is another option and the responsibility is shared between five people instead of two. Change roles. There is always free choice to be or not in the middle.

**3.** More difficult in groups of eight: “carrying the board”. Challenge by choice. One person volunteers to be carried by the rest of the group; three on each side and one person at the head the leader who gives orders to the group: lift, walk

forward, turn the “board” onto the left side, put the feet down, etc.

Coordination, mutual trust and security are of paramount importance.

Progression: once trust is installed in a group, it is possible to swap people around at another session so that they all get to know and trust each other.

## OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to develop **trust, respect** and **responsibility**. The basis is of relationships, expression of emotions and communication.

Physical: to develop **body control**.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Since these exercises are designed to develop trust, the animator must make sure that there is a climate of respect at every stage of the activity. He may need to be very strict.

It is normal, and likely, that the first time children will be agitated and will not concentrate. So it is advisable to try this activity several times at different sessions so that the children can really learn what it is to be worthy of trust (being responsible) and to trust others (letting go).

It is important to take the time to show them how to support each other (by the shoulders) and to hold yourself (arms folded across the chest) for maximum respect and safety. If a player falls once, he will probably not trust the others any more... Remind them that responsibility is shared and that whoever is in the middle can and must communicate how he feels, if he likes how his companions are touching him, if it is too fast, if he is afraid, etc. The others must also communicate by asking him how he feels, etc.



## 12 years and older



### DISCUSSION

- Was it easy to tell the difference between the relaxed body and the stiff body? Can you explain?
- How did you experience the different phases of the exercise?
- What makes you trust people and what makes it difficult to trust them?
- Which is the more difficult: being responsible for the other or trusting the other?
- Was it difficult to say how you felt when you were the board? Can you explain?
- What was the difference between being in a group of three and being in a group of six? Can you explain?
- Etc.

# 10. LITTLE BLIND TRAIN

## PLAY

The players line up one behind the other in groups of four or five with their hands on the shoulders of the person in front. The one at the back, the engine, keeps their eyes open, the others, the carriages, have their eyes closed (or perhaps blindfolded).

The last player drives the train by giving non-verbal instructions through touch:

- to go straight on, he presses with both hands at once on the shoulders of the player in front, who repeats the message he received, until the one at the front gets the message and starts moving;
- to go right he presses on the right shoulder;
- to go left he presses on the left shoulder;
- to stop he lifts both hands off the shoulders (breaking contact).

A silent game ideal for starting or ending a session calmly, or for refocusing a group that is scattered.

The aim of the game is to walk around in a pre-defined space without any of the trains colliding with each other.

Progression: to make the game more difficult, it is possible to make an obstacle course whereby each little train has to go around the obstacles without touching them. The same game can also be done at jogging speed or with longer trains with more players.

## OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to develop both **trust** and non-verbal communication. The players who have their eyes closed have to concentrate and trust those with their eyes open who are **responsible** for the group. **Honesty** is also important for those who have eyes closed (without blindfold).

Physical: nothing in particular. The representation of the body in space is

important because the players are blinded.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The animator should insist on concentration, precision of the messages and softness of the contact. To compensate the lack of vision, the tendency is to harden the contact.

The difficulty is in the delay between giving the order and the movement being carried out. The tendency is to receive the message, understand and carry it out before even transmitting it. The pressure should not be continuous, but pass as quickly and clearly as possible from the last to the first player, who obeys it.

Often, the first time the game is played, the trains crash into each other on purpose, although the aim is to avoid it. It is useful to remind children that this is a game for learning to trust

(the carriages) and to be worthy of trust (the engine). Insist on the need to anticipate changes in direction (the engine).

Since the roles are quite different (middle, front and back) it is important to change positions so that everyone tries out the different roles.

## 9 years and older



### DISCUSSION

- Which was your favourite role? Can you explain?
- Which position was the easiest? Can you explain?
- Was it difficult to trust with your eyes closed?
- Were there differences between the engines? Can you explain?
- What was the best way to avoid the other trains?
- Etc.



# 11. PERSON TO PERSON

## PLAY

The players stand in a circle, in pairs, A and B. The animator (then other players) gives instructions such as “right hand on left knee”. Each player (both A and B) puts their right hand on the left knee of their partner. The next instruction may be, “left foot on right hip” and so on until the players can't move their hands or feet any more. When the animator says “person to person”, the players change partners. The game starts again with the new pairs.

## OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to develop **trust** in others through the physical contact. **Cooperation** and **concentration** are necessary to understand the instructions properly (mentally, they are thinking laterally due to the left-right

A short game where physical contact is present in a playful way. It can be played at the beginning of a session to break the ice or when the group

already knows each other to strengthen relationships.

mirror effect).

Physical: to develop mainly **balance**.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The animator begins by giving easy instructions, so that the players can understand the game and manage the positions without being intimidated by the physical contact. The positions can become progressively more complicated to increase motivation.

This game requires thought, especially for the left-right complication. It is therefore better to start with very simple positions. The positions can also be funny without being difficult: “hand on nose”, “ear to ear”, etc.

Later it is advisable to replace the animator with a player, so that others can develop their skills of creativity and quick thought.

Be careful not to give instructions that are too intimate for the situation or

the group, and never force players to play together if they do not want to. If the group is comfortable with it, the game will foster trust and cooperation between all the players.

## 9 years and older



### **DISCUSSION**

- Did you find the physical contact intimidating? Can you explain? What did you do to reduce the tension?
- Was the game easier to play with some people than with others? Can you explain?
- Did you find it difficult to follow the instructions? Can you explain?
- Did you find it easy or interesting to give instructions? Can you explain?
- Was it physically difficult? Why?
- Etc.

# 12. MIRROR

An ideal activity for developing harmony between two people through synchronisation of movements and non-verbal communication.

## PLAY

The players stand in a line facing each other, in silence. Player A is the model and player B is the mirror. A makes a slow, careful movement and B copies it at the same time. B must concentrate to try and anticipate A's movements and to be a real mirror not just a delayed reflection. A must make sure B can follow. The movements must not be too complicated to begin with. It is important to find good non-verbal communication. Swap roles.

## OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to focus the attention, to **observe** and stay concentrated, while also developing their **creativity** and physical expression.

Physical: nothing in particular apart from making precise movements.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is important to remind the players that they need cooperation. In the beginning there will be laughter, but sooner or later the pairs will concentrate and collaborate to make the activity more interesting. The more harmony there is between players the more complex the gestures can be.

The animator can give an extra instruction and ask them to tell a story with movements.

In order to stress cooperation and adaptability, it is recommended to change pairs.

# 12 years and older



## DISCUSSION

- Which was your favourite role - the model or the one copying? Can you explain? Was there a connection with your every day behaviour?
- Is it difficult to think of gestures and invent stories? Can you explain?
- Was it easier to do this exercise with certain people? Can you explain?
- What could this activity be useful for?
- Etc.



# Variation: Dancing stick

This game is also non-verbal, but with a little more movement, somehow like dancing.

Each pair has a stick (between 20 and 50 cm long) which they balance on their index finger (not using two fingers to “pinch” it). The idea is to move around in the space without letting the stick fall.

A silent dialogue is necessary which requires good communication between the two people. The stick is like a harmony indicator: The more it falls, the more it shows that there is room for improvement in the communication. By changing the pairs it promotes cooperation throughout the group.

This variation functions better after having done the first step of mirroring which already sharpens the necessary skills. The children develop their physi-

cal ease and their ability to move around.

Sometimes the pairs begin to “dance” together, which gives the group a surprising atmosphere.

It is important to ask the question about the leadership at the end of the game: who took command, who followed, if it was fair, if it was easier with some partner or other, etc.



# 13. STOP AND GO

A calm, non-verbal game, well-adapted for starting or ending a session because it is done walking in silence. Ideal for observing the harmony and

group dynamics between players.

## PLAY

The game is played in several stages in a pre-defined area. The players are divided into two groups, group A and B, consisting of six to ten players each.

- a. Group A is walking and group B is standing still. Once the animator claps his hands the groups change roles: group A stands still and group B starts walking.
- b. Same again (group A walks around and group B stands still), however this time they swap roles when a member of group A decides.
- c. Same again, but when a member of group B decides.
- d. Same again, but the decision can come from either group A or group B.

Progression: in another session, it can be made more lively and motivating by

running or even dribbling a basketball or football.

## OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to work on **non-verbal communication** skills, observation, concentration, **strategic thinking** and **cooperation**.

Physical: nothing in particular except some **endurance** if running.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is important to carefully observe the dynamics within the group and the role that each person takes on. It is also interesting to see if there are one or more leaders and which strategy is used to succeed.

The animator must give the players time to get their bearings and interrupt the game early enough to see what strategy they are using: staying

bunched up together? Having a designated leader? The larger the area, the more difficult the game is, for players tend to spread out when in fact staying close would make it easier.

# 12 years and older



## DISCUSSION

- Was there one leader or several? Can you explain?
- How did the players feel who didn't lead but were following?
- Was it difficult to stay connected with the players in your group? Can you explain?
- What was the strategy used to make it work?
- Did you pay attention to each other? Was there any cooperation?
- Etc.





### III. COOPERATION (14 to 20)



## 14. SITTING/ STANDING CIRCLE

### PLAY

#### Standing version:

A group of six to eight players (to start with) stands in a circle, shoulder to shoulder. They make a quarter turn to the right, so that they are standing one behind the other.

Everyone puts their outside hand on the outside shoulder of the player in front. With the inside hand everyone holds the inner leg (under the bent knee) of the person behind. The aim for the group is to move forward in balance and unison without anyone putting down their inside leg.

Variation: the same can be done with the outside leg lifted to see if it is easier jumping on the inside or outside leg. To make the game more difficult, move backwards ...

These two games are popular at the beginning of a session, to get moving as a group, with some physical contact, reminding us in a playful way that

we need each other to reach a common goal.

#### Sitting version:

From the same starting position, in a circle one behind the other, the animator asks everyone to take one step towards the centre of the circle, so that the inside feet are touching. The inner circle made by the feet should be as round and perfect as possible. When the group is ready, each player sits down on the knees of the player behind him simultaneously. The aim is to move forward in this sitting position, one foot after the other.

### OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to work on **respect, trust** in others and strategic **cooperation**. The interdependence of the players and the skills of each person are the pillars of this short game. The idea of **responsibility** and commitment to the group can also be developed.

Physical: both versions need good **balance** and dexterity. In the standing version, **endurance** is practised, whereas in the sitting version **strength** is more necessary.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

It is easier to start with the standing version so that the players can become familiar with the closeness and physical contact, as well as the strategies they need to make it work. It is interesting for the animator to observe whether there is a leader; if everyone is doing what they like or if certain players are uncomfortable about the contact.

For the standing version, the physical aspect is important. Children can be asked to move (as a group) once forwards and then once backwards, or five paces forwards, four backwards, three forwards, two backwards, etc.

This will stimulate them mentally at the same time.  
In the sitting version, the animator must make sure that the children play

safely. In their enthusiasm they can easily fall on top of each other and thus trust can be difficult to rebuild.  
The animator can motivate the



## 9 years and older



children by giving precise objectives like trying to take three paces forward and then three paces backward without falling, or moving their feet forward following the rhythm of a song, etc.

### DISCUSSION

- How did you feel about the physical contact with the others? Can you explain?
- What was the atmosphere in the group?
- Was there a leader? How did he act?
- What strategy did you use?
- Did everyone pay attention to each other? Were people cooperating?
- Etc.

# 15. MAGICAL HOOP

## PLAY

Several hoops are necessary for this game, two to four depending on the size of the group. The players stand in a circle holding hands. The animator asks two of the players to let go of each others hand, puts a hoop between them and asks them to hold each others' hand again. The hoop is hanging between the two players. He does the same with two other players. The aim is to pass the hoops from one player to the next without ever letting go of each others' hands. This requires a strategy for getting the body through the hoop and passing it on to the next player as quickly and harmoniously as possible.

Progression: when the players have understood what to do, a larger group can play together and one jumping rope (tied with a knot in a loop) can

This game is ideal for warming up body and mind in a playful way while working on collaboration.

be added. To make it more motivating the players must pass the ropes round in one direction and the hoops in the other; or any other creative idea.

## OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to work on **cooperation** and **respect** of others' bodies while generating enthusiasm.

Physical: to develop coordination, **dexterity** and **speed**.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The animator should pay attention to the group dynamics in order to add more hoops or new ropes to bring in more challenge when the group's motivation is decreasing for instance.

Remind the players to help each other and find strategies to make it go faster by passing the hoops over the head or the feet first.

Challenge and cooperation can be integrated by asking the group how many rounds they can do in a set time.

## 9 years and older



### **DISCUSSION**

- What did you think of the close physical contact with others?
- What was the best way to have the ropes and hoops moving fast?
- Did you help your neighbours? How?
- Etc.



# 16. STANDING IN ORDER

## PLAY

For this game, each player needs a chair or something to stand on in a circle. The players should be close enough so that they can step from one object to the next without setting foot on the ground, but far enough so that it requires dexterity and help from the neighbour.

The aim is for the players to put themselves into a certain order in a set time (approx. 10 minutes depending on the size of the group) following criteria chosen by the animator, for example in order of height. The players then have to move from one chair to the next without touching the ground until they are organised from the smallest to the tallest. Putting themselves in alphabetical order (of first names) is another simple criteria. This allows a group who does not know each other well to learn each other's names.

A playful and interesting activity in which players carry out a group mission that leads them to work on their group dynamics and help them to get

to know each other better.

Progression: to make the game more difficult one can use criteria such as date of birth - year of birth only, or year and month, or the complete date. The same game can be played without talking so that the players have to find a non-verbal way of communicating.

## OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to develop strategies of **communication**, thinking and **cooperation**. **Trust** between them is strengthened by the need to physical help each other.

Physical: to use **dexterity** and **balance** depending on how far apart the chairs are.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The animator should be attentive to two things: the group dynamics and the safety.

It is very important to observe as many details as possible to be able to comment on the game later. It is not the result which is important but the process. How is the group communicating? Is everybody listening? Who is taking charge? Are there one or more leaders? Is there cooperation, or is everyone playing for themselves, or in small groups? Are the players willingly helping each other? What happens in terms of physical contact when moving from one chair to the next?

It is better to start with an easy criteria (for example, boys – girls), so that the players can understand the principle. The level of difficulty can be progressively increased.

# 12 years and older



## DISCUSSION

- Which strategy did you use to reach the objective?
- How did you communicate? Describe it?
- Were there several leaders? Were they self-appointed?
- What was it like having physical contact with the others? Can you explain?
- Were some positions easier than others (beginning or end? youngest or oldest?)
- Etc.



# 17. ANIMAL MIMES

## PLAY

Players are separated in groups from five to ten. Each person receives the name of an animal (either written on pieces of paper which they pick out of a hat, or drawn, or whispered into the ear) that has to be kept secret. If several groups are playing at the same time, there should be a list for each group (with the same or different animals).

The aim for each group is to line up according to the increasing order of the size of animal, without talking or without any kind of sound. They have to mime their animals.

When a group is finished, the animator checks the exact order by asking every player to name his neighbour's animal.

A simple as well as complex activity, attractive and creative, ideal for developing cooperation within a group.

## Rules:

- everything is done in silence
- all the members of the group have to know all the names of the animals in the end.

Variation: with younger children the game can be made easier by being "blind" instead of "mute". Then children imitate the sounds of the animals for instance.

## OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to develop **self-esteem** through **creativity** and also **strategic thinking**. The players need to feel free enough to express themselves with their body to reach a group objective. They also need to be honest about respecting the rule of silence.

Physical: to develop **self-expression** through movements.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The animator, in advance, prepares a list of animals of different sizes. It is important to choose animals that are sufficiently different to avoid misunderstanding about the size of each animal. He must make it clear that the game is non-verbal so that the children use alternative forms of communication.

The animator will pay attention to the strategies used in the groups to be able to make them aware of how they are working. It is not the result which is important but the process. Are the players at ease with their bodies while imitating animals? Are certain people uncomfortable? What strategy are they using? Does each one imitate their animal in turn or do they all do it at once? Does a single player take charge of the situation? Is there good communication or lots of misunderstanding and disagreement?

# 9 years and older (6 y.)



## DISCUSSION

- Was it difficult to get other people to guess your animal? Was it difficult to guess another person's animal? Why?
- How did you feel about not talking? Can you explain?
- How did you organise yourselves in your group? Were there one or more leaders in the group?
- How did the non-verbal communication work between you?
- Etc.

# 18. MAD MACHINE

A game of expression through gestures and sounds which generates enthusiasm and stimulates creativity and interaction.

## PLAY

The players stand in a large circle. The first player goes to the middle and invents a movement together with a noise. For example lying down on his back and pedalling in the air while making a certain sound. A second player joins him with a different sound and different movement which integrates into what the first player is doing. For example, the movement can be synchronized with the movement of the first player's leg. A third player joins them, and so on until all the players form a big crazy machine in a sort of cacophonous dance.

## OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to develop expression through movement and **creativity** through gestures and noises. The idea is to find coordinated movements in

order to be in harmony with the group.

Physical: to practise **coordination** of movement in relation to others.

According to the chosen gesture, which can be more or less athletic, **resistance** can be taken into account.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The animator can give an example to show the desired dynamics of the game and encourage the players when they are a bit shy and do not dare to make large movements.

Two main tendencies have been observed in children playing this game for the first time. Either they imitate the movements of the previous players or they place themselves beside them without really integrating themselves. This can cause a sort of sum of individuals instead of a group of coordinated persons. The animator should

watch out for these gestures and give advice in order to ensure that the machine is coordinated. The better the cooperation, the more interesting the result is and the more bonds are created between the players.

If the group is large the first players can disengage from the machine at some point and re-join later with a new movement and a new sound. This coming and going makes the machine livelier.

12 years  
and older



## DISCUSSION

- Was it easy or difficult to come up with an original movement? Can you explain?
- Was it easy or difficult to come up with a movement which integrated with the others? Can you explain?
- Did you feel like part of the machine or separate? Can you explain?
- What did you think of the final result? Can you explain?
- Etc.



# 19. SHARK-ISLAND

## PLAY

The game needs a defined area and a small carpet or something which can be made smaller (ropes, plastic, etc.). If the group is too large, divide it into several groups of six to ten players, playing at the same time. Each group needs its own place for playing.

The animator tells a story:

The children are at sea, swimming and having fun in the water (the children run around and pretend to swim). When the (imaginary) sharks arrive, the lifeguard (the animator) whistles once (or claps his hands) and everyone swims to safety on the island (carpet or other) not leaving a single foot in the water. When the danger has passed, the lifeguard whistles twice and the children can go back into the water. But the tide is coming in and the island gets smaller each time (the animator should fold the carpet to make

A small game based on metaphors, well adapted for young children to work on solidarity and physical contact while having fun.

the area smaller and smaller). When the animator whistles again the children get back on the island so that nobody is left in the sea. If one or more children are left in the water (even a foot off the carpet) and get eaten by the sharks, the whole group has to do a collective exercise like running three times round the place or any other idea.

The children must find a way to help each other so that they can all manage to stay on what is left of the carpet.

## OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to develop ways of **cooperating**, as well as **respect** for others and **trust** through physical contact.

Physical: to improve **balance** and **strength** depending on which strategies are used, as well as **resistance** since the game involves running.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The level of difficulty depends on the number of players in each group and the area of the carpet. It is up to the animator to manage this, evaluating the abilities of the players. The animator must give the instructions clearly; no part of anyone's body must be off the carpet or touching the ground.

It is interesting to watch strategies evolve. There is often a tendency not to think about anyone else: for example, certain children sit on the carpet, without thinking about room for the others. Selfish or selfless behaviours can be a basis for discussion.

It is important to remind the children about the instructions and encourage them to talk to each other to find creative strategies (for example: link arms, leaning on the inside foot with the outside foot in the air, or make a human pyramid).

The players have to accept that they will touch each other and be touched. Respect and trust are important

aspects which the animator must point out.

# 6 years and older



## DISCUSSION

- Was it difficult to be in physical contact with the others? Can you explain?
- What were the different attitudes in the group? Helping each other? Selfishness? Did anybody refuse to collaborate? Can you explain?
- What did you think of the collective exercises? Can you explain?
- Etc.



# 20. FIVE PASS BALL

## PLAY

The game requires one ball for two teams of four to six players each that will play against each other. The goal is to score a point by making five passes (or more) without the other team intercepting the ball or the ball being dropped. When a point has been scored the ball is passed to the other team. If the ball is dropped, the number of passes starts from zero again and the ball is passed to the other team. If team A intercepts the ball, team B stops counting and team A wins the ball.

### Rules:

- no walking or running with the ball;
- no touching or hitting the other players (no physical contact);
- no passing the ball to the same player twice.

Adapted games for developing basic skills for ballgames (basketball, football and others) such as passing, marking, defending, etc.

Progression: to increase the level of difficulty the play area can be made larger or the number of passes increased in order to score a point

## OBJECTIVES

Psychosocial: to develop **cooperation, honesty, communication** and non-violence through respect for the other. The quality of the game improves quickly if the players talk to each other and work together.

Physical: to practise **endurance, passing, marking,** peripheral vision, etc.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The animator must be very present at the beginning to correct issues such as passes, defence, marking, etc. He should insist on strong communication (e.g. calling the name of a player before passing the ball).

The animator referees at the beginning after which he leaves it up to the players to self-arbitrate. This will develop honesty and personal responsibility.

This game needs to be practised several times before the children understand the basic moves which will improve the quality of the whole game.

If there are four teams of four to six players, make smaller play areas. Have everyone play at the same time and change the teams around every five minutes.

To make the game more cooperative, the following rules can be added: the point only counts (or counts double) if all players in the team have touched the ball. The players can also be joined in pairs (loosely tied at the ankles, knees or hips) and play in the same way but in pairs.

# 9 years and older



## DISCUSSION

- What was your strategy for scoring points and preventing the other team from scoring?
- Did everyone respect the rules? Can you explain?
- What do you think of the rule that the points only count if everyone has touched the ball?
- What other rules could be introduced to increase cooperation?
- Do you find self-arbitration difficult? Can you explain?
- How does this game help you to practise for ball games?
- Etc.

## Variation: Ball behind the line

12 years and older

For this game you will need two long ropes and one ball for two teams.

This version is more like basketball. The goals are represented by a rope stretched out at the end of the game area or a line is drawn on the ground or in the sand.

The idea of the game is the same as before, with the same rules, but this time the number of passes is free. To score a point the players must put the ball behind the line. The goal does not count if the ball is thrown, if it bounces or if there is physical contact. The defence can only stay in front of the line.

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The activities and games selected have come from various training courses, books and experiences. The sources are sometimes unknown as the games are passed down orally and informally. What is important is to continue using them throughout the world across different cultures.

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