



# Teens

## AS TEACHERS



## TEENS AS TEACHERS – TEAMBUILDING ACTIVITIES FOR GROUPS

### **KNOTS**

No more than thirteen people stand in a circle, and each player must reach across the circle (or at least 2 players away) and grab a hand. Then with the other and they must grab the hand of a different player. Now that you are in a knot, see if you can unwind without letting go.

### **HAND OVER HAND**

This game can be played sitting at a table or sitting in a tight circle on the floor. The number of persons in the circle is limited only by the size of the table or the number of people you can comfortably involve in a circle. About a dozen players works well.

Play begins with everyone at the table reaching out to the right and placing their right hand on the table, palm down. Next, everyone in the circle reaches out to their left, placing their left hand, palm down, to the left of their neighbor's right hand. (Wrists will be crossed.) One person begins around the circle by tapping their hand on the table/floor. The tapping travels to the left with the next hand in the circle. Hands are lifted and tapped in order around the circle. Practice going the opposite direction as well. A hand that is tapped twice on the table/floor reverses the direction of play.

Once play begins, hands that are tapped out of order are removed from the circle. The game continues until only two hands are left in play.

### **GROUP JUGGLING**

Begin by forming circles of eight to fifteen people. Use a variety of soft balls. Select a leader to start tossing a ball. Each person tosses the ball to one person, without repeating people, remembering who they tossed the ball to until the final person in the circle tosses the ball back to the one who started the action. The game can be used to help people learn names, calling the name of the person to whom they are tossing.

When the group becomes successful at tossing and catching the ball around the circle, additional balls may be added. Six balls being tossed in a circle of twelve people will produce lots of chaos. Signals to reverse direction will add tension and require attention to the process.

The emphasis in this activity should be on cooperative success. If someone misses the ball they should quickly pick it up and continue play.

### **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!





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### 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.

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### PASS THE CAN

The group sits in a circle on the floor with feet up in the air and toward the center of the circle. Shoes are optional. On “go” pass a large can (large coffee can works well) all the way around the group using only feet until it arrives back where it started. Time how long it takes and try to break the record in succeeding attempts.

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### 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.

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### 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.

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### 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.

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### 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.

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### MAGIC CARPET

The "Magic Carpet" is a piece of tarp or sheet approximately 4 feet by 5 feet for groups of 8-12 participants. Your group is on a Magic Carpet ride, high above the countryside. You suddenly realize that you are going the wrong direction, because the magic carpet is upside-down! Since you are no longer touching the ground, you must turn the carpet over without stepping off.

### 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!

### RESOURCE LIST

Everybody WINS: 150 Non-competitive Games for Kids  
Cynthia MacGregor  
ISBN: 1-58062-063-9

More Activities that Teach  
Tom Jackson  
ISBN: 0-916095-75-4

Youth Leadership in Action: A Guide to Cooperative Games and Group Activities written by and for Youth Leaders  
ISBN: 0-7872-0107-3

Still More Activities that Teach  
Tom Jackson  
ISBN: 0-9664633-5-8

104 Activities that Builds: Self-Esteem, Teamwork, Communication, Anger Management, Self-Discovery, Coping Skills  
Alanna Jones  
ISBN: 0-9662341-3-8

Games (& other stuff) for Group: Book 1  
Chris Caver & friends  
ISBN: 1-885473-39-7

Activities that Teach  
Tom Jackson  
ISBN: 0-916095-49-5

A Handbook of Interactive Exercises for Groups  
Constance A. Barlow, Judith A. Blythe, Margaret Edmonds  
ISBN: 0-205-27854-X

