

Cooperative Musical Chairs

4-H Project:

Communications

Life Skill:

Communicating with others,
Cooperation

National Education Standard:

NL-ENG.K-12.4
Communication Skills

Success Indicator:

Work together to accomplish
a task.

Time Involved:

15–20 minutes

Suggested Group Size:

5–30 children. Note: If more
than 10 people participate,
divide children into smaller
groups.

This online “bonus” activity is part of
the *Exploring the Treasures of 4-H*
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See www.n4hccs.org/exploring4h for
more information.

Talking it Over

Share What You Did:

- What did you like about this version of musical chairs?
- How did you feel about this game?
- What was it like to have to make quick decisions?

Process What’s Important:

- How did your group decide to get everyone seated after the music stopped?
- What did you learn about communicating with others?
- What was hard about trying to get everyone seated after the music stopped?

Generalize to Your Life:

- What other kinds of decisions do you make with input from others?
- What did you learn about working with others?

Apply What You Learned:

- What would you do differently next time you played this game?
- How will the skills you practiced in this game help you in other ways?

Participation in games designed for one person or team to win and the other to lose reinforces self-protection instincts. In this activity children will learn that helping the group succeed is a new way of “winning.”

Getting started

First, read through this lesson and gather necessary materials. If you need more information about the topic, refer to “Background Information” below.

Do the Activity

1. Read or explain the following to the children:
You are going to play a game similar to musical chairs. The one difference in this game is that everyone must be sitting on a chair—even the person who does not have a chair! In a typical game of musical chairs, the person without a chair would be out and has lost the game. However, in this version of the game each person needs to help figure out ways to make sure everyone has a place to sit.
2. Set the chairs up like a typical game of musical chairs. This could be in a circle or a row, whichever works best for your setting.
3. Have children form a circle around the chairs.
4. Begin playing music.
5. Stop playing the music after a short period of time (approximately 10 to 60 seconds). Everyone in the group should try to find a place for everyone to sit.
6. Ask children to stand up before starting the next round.
7. Remove one chair from the row or circle.
8. Repeat steps 3–7. Continue the game until the children cannot safely fit everyone on the amount of chairs in the row or circle.



Materials Needed

- Tape or CD player
- Age appropriate music (be careful about language in the music)
- Chairs (one less than the number of children in the group)

Background Information

Cooperative Games

As children grow, they become more and more self-protective. Participation in games designed for one person or team to win and the other to lose makes those instincts even stronger. This may often lead to developmental delays. Cooperative games show children that helping the group succeed is a new way of “winning.” It is best to demonstrate these concepts to children when they are young. It is especially crucial that these ideals are introduced by someone the children care about and respect.

Activity Summary

When we help each other everyone wins and everyone feels good. There are not any losers.



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