

## Youth Group Games

### All Over

All over is a pretty straight forward game. It's perfect for middle school as you're able to get a lot of energy out before a talk.

You can use dodge balls, Frisbees or whatever. Divide your group into two even teams and mark the room in half with a strip of painter's tape down the center. Divide your objects evenly and place them on either side of the center. The leader yells, "all over" to start the game. Players try to get all of the objects over and be the first to have their side completely empty of objects. They can throw or kick them across as an option. Depending upon how many objects you have the game can be near impossible to win. You may need to start a countdown and then have the leader yell, "stop." The team with the least number of objects on their side wins.

For added fun you can divide the room in four equal sides like foursquare and have four teams competing.

### Animal Bird Fish

Sit everyone in a circle, and select someone to start. This person (a) walks up to any other person (b) in the group and says either "animal" "bird" or "fish."

The person (b) must then name a specific one of these that has not yet been said during the game, before (a) counts to 10. If (b) succeeds, (a) stays in the middle and quickly approaches a new victim. If (b) cannot think of one in time, he or she goes to the middle, and (a) returns to his seat.

### Back to Back

This is the game where you start out with two people sitting back to back and they have to stand straight up without using their hands. Add one person every time they stand up successfully. Our record is ten! The students will be amazed at how it works!

The Point: This is a great game for showing students what teamwork can do. It would be nearly impossible to accomplish this by oneself.

### **Blind leading the Blind**

Blindfolded person has to accomplish tasks. Team can't talk.

Materials: one blindfold and random objects relating to task

How to Play...There are three main groups for this game:

- 1) The blindfolded person
- 2) The team spokesman
- 3) The team

The blindfolded person has a selected task is put on a field.

The team spokesman faces away from the field and is not allowed to turn around to look at the field.

The team stands in front of the spokesman, looking at the field, but the team is not allowed to talk.

Through motions the team must try to get the spokesman (who can't see the field) to yell to the blindfolded person and explain what to do.

The facilitator has previously set up some task (i.e. go pick up a ball, bring it to a bucket, and put it in) and has told the team what the blindfolded person needs to accomplish.

### **Celebrity Head**

For this game, you need three headbands or head pieces onto which you slot or stick a piece of paper or card.

The person wearing the headband should not be able to see what's written on the card. Make sure you have 10-15 cards, and write the name of a celebrity in big letters on each card.

Then choose three volunteers to sit in front of the group. Put a head piece on each volunteer. Be careful not to let them see the name of the person on their head piece. It's then their job to guess which name is on their head, but the catch is the answer can only be yes or no.

For example, "Am I a male"? "Am I on TV" etc. Each person can ask as many questions as they want until they get a "No" answer, then it goes to the next person and so-on until eventually someone guesses and they are declared the winner! This works well if you throw in a 'local' celebrity (such as the Youth Pastor, etc).

### **Electricity**

Time: 15 – 20 minutes

Preparation:

- A quarter
- An object for teams to grab (ball, stuffed animal, water bottle, etc.)

Summary: Squeeze your teammate's hand as quickly as possible- only if the coin comes up as heads!

Goal: Be the first team to grab the object, if the quarter comes up as heads.

How to Play Electricity:

1. Arrange everyone into two equally numbered teams. Have both teams line up in parallel lines. At the end of the line, place the object about five feet away (in equal distance from both ends of the line). You'll be at the head of the line.
2. Explain the rules: Everyone in line will need to hold hands and close their eyes. Only the first person of both lines can open their eyes. Flip the coin in the air, catch it, and reveal the quarter to the first person of both teams.
3. If the quarter comes up as "heads", the first person squeezes the next person's hand. The second person squeezes the next person's hand, and so forth. At the end of the line, the last person runs to grab the object. The team that grabs the object first wins a point for the round. If the quarter comes up as "tails", then no one squeezes anyone's hand. If there's an "accidental" hand squeeze and the quarter comes up as "tails", the team that grabbed the object loses a point for the round.
4. For the second round, the first person goes to the back of the line and the game continues. The first team that reaches 10 points wins the game.

### **Grog (Flashlight)**

You take apart a flashlight and hide the parts throughout the play area. One kid is the Grog, which is a monster that can freeze you in place by tagging you. Everyone has to work together to find the parts, assemble the flashlight, and shine it on the Grog to defeat "it." Our group of students LOVED this game. It was a favorite by far.

### **Paper Telephone**

Players alternate between writing and drawing, watching a message change.  
Materials: Pens and paper.

How to Play:

- 1) Each player receives a stack of papers. Each stack of papers should contain the number of sheets for how many people are playing (i.e. if 6 people are playing, each person should have 6 pieces of paper for a total of 36 sheets altogether).
- 2) The facilitator instructs players to put a small number on the bottom right of each sheet in incremental order (first sheet has a 1, second sheet a 2, and so on...). Then the players stack their own sheets so that 1 is on top and the highest number is on the bottom.
- 3) The facilitator says go and every player writes a message on the 1st sheet. The message can be whatever desires.
- 4) After 1 minute, the facilitator says switch and all the players slide their entire stack, with the message on top, to the right. The receiving player takes the stack, reads the message, and then puts the message on the back of the stack. The player then, on the 2nd card, proceeds to draw a picture representing the message the first player wrote.
- 5) After 1 minute, the facilitator says switch and players again slide their entire stack to the right, this time with the number 2 card (drawing) on top. The receiving player looks at the drawing, puts it in the back of the stack, and writes a message about what the drawing was.
- 6) The facilitator continues saying "switch" every 1 minute with players alternating from writing to drawing and back to writing and so on.
- 7) When the stacks of paper are all used, the players should slide the stack to their right one final time and the originator of the stack should now have their own stack.
- 8) Players may read through the stacks, laughing at the modifications their original sentence took as it passed through multiple pictures and multiple interpretations of those pictures.

### **Scatter Ball**

-To start play, ball must be dropped on the x. All players must be touching the wall in order for play to start.

-Once play has started, it is everyone for themselves. There are NO alliances. Having an alliance will result in a 3-game ban.

-You may only take 3 steps once you have possession of the ball. Once you have taken 3 steps you have 5 seconds to throw the ball.

-Once you have thrown the ball, the ball must touch another person before

you can pick up the ball again. You cannot throw the ball against the wall and pick it up again if the ball has not touched another player.

-Once you are out, you must sit on the sidelines until the next game. You may not touch the ball if you are out.

-If you get hit in the head with the ball while you are playing, you are not out. There are NO head shots.

-If you throw the ball and it is caught, the player who threw the ball is out.

-If you throw the ball and it hits multiple people before the ball touches the wall, ceiling, or ground, then all those who the ball hit is out.

-If the ball hits the ceiling, wall, or ground, it is a dead ball. If the ball touches you after hitting one of these objects, you are NOT out.

-If you throw the ball and it bounces off a player and you catch it, then the player which the ball hit is not out. Both players remain in the game.

-If you leave the playing area while you are playing the game, you are out unless the judge rules otherwise.

-ANY arguing or whining about decisions will result in a 5-game ban.

-In the instance that there is a fight for the ball, a jump ball will be called and both players must retreat to opposite walls. The ball will then again be dropped on the center x for all players still remaining.

-All final decisions are made by the judge (adult).

-Have a good attitude and have fun!

### **Train Wreck**

Have two rows of chairs, one less than the number of people playing.

Number off the chairs, so that evens are on one side, and odds on the other.

The person who is it, stands in front, and calls out numbers, or something of that sort, to the whole "Train." Those numbers then have to get up and switch with another person. The person in front tries to get in one of the open seats. If "it" succeeds, the person left standing is it. Start out with only calling out two numbers, but let it get harder as it goes along (three, four, seven, etc... different numbers called out. Or any number divisible by three! Cruel things like that) To keep it lively, the people do not keep their numbers, the chairs do. After they switch chairs, they have to figure out what their new number is. Also, to keep everyone moving, the person in front can yell, "Train Wreck!" At which point every one gets up and runs to a different chair.

### **What Time Is It, Mrs. Fox?**

The object of the game is to walk past Mrs. (or Mr.) Fox without getting caught. To play, pick someone to be the Fox. Everyone else should line up

on the starting line. The Fox will stand about 20 feet away with her back turned. The rest of the players say, "What time is it Mrs. (or Mr.) Fox?" If Mrs. (or Mr.) Fox answers a time like, "It's five o'clock" players take five steps forward. If she answers, "It's one o'clock" players take one step forward, and so on. The players can take any size step they want. If Mrs. Fox says, "It's time to eat you!" she turns around and chases the other players back to the starting line. If Mrs. Fox catches someone, he becomes the next Fox.

### **Stuck in the Mud**

To play, pick someone to be "it."

When "it" tags someone, she is stuck in the mud and can't move.

To get unstuck, someone else has to crawl through their legs.

To make it harder, you can add this twist. If a player touches the stuck player's legs when crawling through them, then they are stuck too.

If everybody gets tagged, the game is over.

The last person to be tagged is "it" in the next round.

### **Refrigerator Tag**

To play, pick four objects to be bases and give each base a name: "Don't like it," "Love it," "It's OK," "Never tried it." You can make signs for each base if you like.

Pick someone to be "IT." "IT" stands in the middle and the players stand on any base they want. "IT" calls out the name of a food.

Players then have to run to the base that describes how they feel about that food. "IT" tries to tag a player before he or she reaches the base. The player who is tagged then becomes "IT!"

### **Red Light, Green Light**

To play, one person is chosen to be the traffic cop.

All the players stand on the starting line and the traffic cop has his back to the rest of the players. When he says "green light," players try to run to the finish line.

When the traffic cop says "red light," he turns around and players have to stop in their tracks.

If the traffic cop catches a player moving, he sends them back to the starting line.

First person to cross the finish line wins and becomes the new traffic cop.

**Sardines or Christians in the Catacombs**

This is the game of sardines, but explain it with the story of how the early Christians met in the catacombs, but they still increased in number. One person hides in a dark place, and then as people find them, they join in hiding, until one person remains. It's hide and seek, backwards.

**Life-Size Clue**

The youth group gathers in the evening when the church is dark. They congregate in one lit room and one person goes to hide a large doll (any stuffed animal will work). That person also hides a "murder" weapon (hint: use goofy items to keep it light such as a spatula or telephone), then comes back and releases people out of the room one at a time. One random person will be given a flashlight and they are the "killer." Players walk around and have to find the weapon and victim (doll). Players also need to know who the "killer" is without getting caught. Players are caught when the "killer" flashes the light at you. If the "killer" catches a player, they are out and have to go sit in the main room.

**Fear Factor**

Set up several stations that vary in grossness or scariness. Break kids in two teams and let them choose which stations they play. Assign points for each activity earned then add them up at the end to determine the winning team. Cuisine Station: Fill several large plates or bowls with your choice of sardines, pigs feet, frog legs, seaweed, etc. (look in the foreign food section at your local supermarkets). Place another empty container at the other side of the stage or the other end of the room. The student has a designated amount of time to grab one of the items in their mouth, run across the room and drop it into the empty container. They must transfer as many food items as possible in the amount of time given.

Here's a fun, sneaky trick: melt a snicker's in the microwave for several seconds. It will look like something else entirely and it takes some time before students realize its candy.

Free Fall Station: Contestant stands on raised platform and falls backwards into arms of catchers. Use mats just in case.

Pudding Station: Contestants dig sardines out of chocolate pudding with their toes. Use time limit for elimination.

**Digging for Gold:** Fill a huge (clear) Rubbermaid storage container with water and enough potting soil to make it cloudy and dirty looking, along with a few worms, and a few other gross things (be creative). Put several coins in it and each team member has to grab two coins out.

**Don't Crack station:** Put garbage bags down for this one or go outside. Put eggs under both of the students heels. They must stand on their toes to avoid crushing the eggs. The person who can last the longest without crushing their eggs wins for their entire team. Get creative with different station ideas and customize it to fit your students.

### **Photo Scavenger Hunt**

Assign points for odd items that students can find to take a picture with around the Church property or within a designated area. Get creative with your lists. Plan to do this at a time like VBS when much of the church staff is present so you can include silly ones like “do the air guitar with the worship pastor” or “do the disco with the children’s pastor.” Give them a time limit and deduct points for every minute they are late returning. The added bonus of this game is you automatically have some great photos of your students that you can put in the youth group room.

### **Minute to Win it**

This is a game show on NBC and its full of mini-challenges that must be completed within one minute. On the NBC website, you’ll find a list of all the games including a video tutorial, official rules, and a list of supplies needed for each game. There are more than 50 games you can choose from! Pick a handful of the ones you want to use then make sure you have all the necessary supplies on hand. Watch an episode of the show on the website to play it like the pros do or create your own twist on the game.

### **Draw It**

There’s two teams, each with a white board. Give them a word and the team has to guess the word they drew. This would be a good ice breaker activity before a lesson if you tie in themes from the lesson into the drawings.

### **Four on the Couch**

There’s one less seat than people in the room (must have a couch -and can play three on a couch if necessary). You need at least two teams and



everyone puts their name in hat. Everyone draws a name and that's his or her new name for the game. (it's a secret!) The person to the left of the empty seat calls out a name. The person, who drew that name, now moves to the empty seat, and switches names with the person who called out the name. Now the person to the left of the new empty seat calls a name. You repeat the process. Goal is to get 4 of your team onto the same couch. (so, you have to try to get to the empty the couch and call the right names to get folks on the couch -takes some thinking but fun and competitive in a non-athletic way)

### **Red-hot Poker**

Everybody stands in a circle and hold hands. You have something in the middle of the circle (anything works, try a big 50-gallon trash can) and it is the red-hot poker. You then try to drag, push and pull one another into the red-hot poker. If you touch it or break hands, then you are out. Play until you have the last one standing.

### **Slip 'N Slide Kickball**

If you have a group of athletic, competitive students this one is for you. Basically, it's kickball but you add a slip 'n slide between the bases. Keep some band aids on hand for this one just in case.

### **Capture the Flag**

This one needs no explanation, but feel free to add twists. Include more than one flag, take turns having the teams play offense and defense, play with three or four teams going against each other, etc.

### **Tug of War**

This is another classic, but is always a hit with youth groups. Make it extra fun by doing it once a year and utilizing interesting competitions: students vs. leaders, boys vs. girls, senior high vs. junior high. The key to a good match-up is to put a small number of the strongest against a large number of the weakest. For example, take a handful senior high boys and place them against 30 middle schoolers.

### **Ultimate Duck-Duck-Goose or Duck-Duck-Goose-Inception**

When there are more than 50 students, this game is a lot of fun. Play duck-duck-goose as you normally would, however when a few people get tagged

and they go to the middle, then they begin another game of duck-duck-goose. Two other twists you can initiate are using a sponge while the person is going around and ducking to hold over people's heads or having more than one person go around at a time.

### **Tap it Out Telephone**

This one's great because you don't need any supplies. It's like telephone but instead of whispering something, you use your finger and draw the word on the person's back. Everyone is in a straight line, with multiple teams doing this. First team that gets to the last person and has the correct word wins.

### **Name That Tune!**

Divide students into teams and have one student face off against another student from the other team. Play five seconds of a popular song from iTunes and have them guess. If both students don't know, let anyone call it out.

### **Seated Basketball**

This one is a favorite because it requires strategy and teamwork. The game is divided up between two teams. The goal is to get a ball into a basket. This can be a basketball hoop, but I have found it just as fun playing it with laundry baskets placed on a table. Each player has their own chair and is played in rounds. At the beginning of a round, the players have a short amount of time to place their chairs in a position. Once placed, they are not allowed to move from their spot. They then must pass the ball to each other, without it getting intercepted by the opposing team. After each round the players become more strategic and shift from focusing on offense and defense. Whereas one round may consist of one team placing all their chairs around the opposing goal, they'll quickly realize that they are unable to shoot from their location. Likewise, a team that has no one in the middle of the field is unable to make an adequate pass to their teammates. An interesting side effect of this game is the loner and unpopular student will often become the most passed to player. They are the ones that are open, because the opposing team neglects to place a chair next to them to guard.

### **Real World Bible Drills**

Bible drills can be fun but with a twist on an old classic game, students can translate it into real life skills. Instead of saying a specific Bible verse like John 3:16, have them find narrative stories like David and Goliath. After doing a few of these narrative type stories, branch out even further. Have them lookup a passage of the Bible that someone can use if they feel deep sadness, struggle with addiction, feel lonely, etc. This really challenges the students to use critical thinking and provides them with skills they can use later in life.

### **Penny Chinny**

Give everyone a penny. On 'go' they must balance the penny on their chin while trying to knock everyone else's penny off. This means the penny will lay flat on the chin and the students will be looking up into the air. Last one standing with the penny balanced wins.

### **Jeopardy**

Devise a number of questions and set up a board to play jeopardy. A fun twist to add is to create one or two categories that have nothing to do with the Bible. I always tried to add one about myself because the questions to think of were easy, and it helped new students get to know me.