



TRICKS & TIPS FOR RUNNING ENGAGING YOUTH GROUP GAMES

Fun changes young people's lives. There's nothing better than getting together with friends to do fun activities. But sometimes things don't quite work out. Here's some troubleshooting to help run engaging games.

If young people look disengaged when you're explaining something:

- Get excited about what you're asking your young people to do.
- To remove distraction, present from the MOST boring place in the room. Look for where windows, TVs and distractions are and make sure they are not behind you. It removes any reason why a young person shouldn't be looking at you.

If young people get confused or bored once they start playing a game:

- Make sure you're not making it too complicated when you're explaining the game.
- Practice how you are going to say your game instructions and keep it simple.
- In 1min try to explain: What's the objective? How can you win?
- If you can, try and demonstrate how it will work, rather than just telling.

If young people choose not to engage or participate in an activity:

- Consider if what you're asking is something you'd want to do as a young person.
- Make sure all your leaders are pumped for it and getting involved. For young people to participate your leaders need to, and it will help build relationships too.
- Give awards for winners and those who got involved who normally wouldn't. Praise and encourage good examples of participation.

If you find yourself correcting young people and coming across as negative, grumpy, or yelling:

- Take a breath and reposition yourself. Young people will listen to you if you are speaking in a positive way.
- Remember, even if it's not going the way you planned you are creating fun memories.
- Use a squeaky dog toy, horn or something else silly as a fun way to get young people's attention, so the noise is what interrupts them, rather than you yelling.

If you find it difficult to come up with new games all the time to keep your ministry fresh:

- Simple games work well, so keep doing them. Find ways to 'level up' your games so you can keep playing them and they don't get stale.
- Take a simple game that everyone knows and just put a youth ministry spin on it. For example, when playing silent ball, instead of using a ball we used an old, small microwave. Fun and memorable!

If people don't understand how fun is connected to following Jesus:

- Fun is a universal language of engagement. Young people tell us that the reason they first engaged with the Salvation Army was that it is a fun place they can be with their friends.
- When Jesus talked about the Kingdom of God, he talked about a party where everyone was invited (Luke 14). We don't just tell young people about God's Kingdom, we can show them through fun!

Fun can make a difference in young people's lives. If you want to talk more about how to engage young people through fun, contact the National Youth & Young Adults Team.