

youth games

THE KEY GAME

WORKS BEST

Indoors, with a small to medium sized group (up to about 15-20 people). It's not much of a high-energy game, so don't expect it to bring that 'wow' factor to your youth church. It's better as a fun game for a small group or as a boredom-buster during camp.

NEEDS

A set of keys (more keys on the ring the better)
A walking stick or something of similar proportions
A blindfold

THE GAME

This is a classic small-group game of strategy, agility and concentration. Sit your group in a circle, and place a chair in the middle. Your circle should be about 8-10 metres across, so that each player is at least 4-5 metres from the chair in the centre. Place the keys underneath the chair.

Choose one person from the circle to be the 'Guard'. The guard sits on the chair blindfolded, holding the walking stick. Choose a second player to be the thief. The thief must try and steal the keys out from underneath the guard without being touched by the walking stick. The guard's aim is to use their ears to determine which direction the thief is coming from and use the walking stick to prevent the thief getting the keys. If the thief wins by getting the keys back to their starting spot, they become the guard and a new thief is chosen. If the guard wins by touching the thief with the stick, then they stay as the guard and a new thief is chosen.

NOTES

Having a clear timelimit for the thief will help the game flow and will pressure the more cautious thieves to hurry up. To greatly increase the difficulty, put the keys inside a tin can.

The thief must remove the keys from the tin can, leaving the tin can where it is underneath the chair. The loud noise that comes from removing the keys is a great tip-off to the guard.

As a variation, play without the walking stick but instead give the guard a 'gun' with 5 'bullets'.

The gun can be five tennis balls or can even be as simple as the guard pointing in a direction and saying 'bang'. If the guard 'shoots' the thief then the thief loses, but if the guard runs out of ammo then the thief automatically wins. Playing this way forces the guard to rely a lot more heavily on their hearing.