



Team Builders

Group juggle

- Individual
- Pairs
- Small group
- Whole group

Uses: To learn the names of others in the group and to work together as a team.

Resources: 8-10 koosh balls.

Time: 15 minutes.

What to do:

Work in groups of about fifteen, standing in a circle. Set up a throwing/catching sequence around the group so that each person throws and receives the ball once.

1. You begin by explaining that this activity will help to explore how we can work as a big team. During this process they will learn at least two more names from the group.
2. Begin by passing the koosh ball from person to person with each person saying their name out loud. This will help everyone to hear each other's names once.
3. Now a pattern is built up with one koosh ball being thrown across the circle; as the ball is thrown the thrower says their name and the name of the person they are throwing it to (e.g. Manjit to Jan). The thrower then crosses their arms across their chest to show that they have already had a go. The koosh ball is then thrown from person to person, until everyone has received it once and thrown it once. The pattern is complete when the ball is returned to the facilitator. As the leader you feed in ball after ball gauging, how much /how fast the group can take it.
4. The same pattern is repeated to get a smoother, faster response. Reassure the group that they just need to remember who threw the koosh ball to them and who they threw it to.

Once the sequence is established, more koosh balls can be introduced into the circle at intervals until the effect is as if the group is juggling. Make sure people don't stoop down to pick up any balls that have gone astray – they'll end up with the next one coming towards them when they least expect it!

Make it different:

If everyone is up for it, add some complications:

- Clap once you've thrown a ball.
- Ask the group to rotate right/left (everyone takes one step to the right/left).
- Turn around after you've thrown a ball.
- Disband the circle altogether!

You could really challenge the group by reversing the pattern you set up; so you throw to the person who originally threw to you. e.g. Jan to Manjit.

Points to make:

- Good for learning names, very useful for concentration, observation, and developing co-ordination.
- There is a strategy, which may need drawing out, that individuals only need to concentrate on two people in the circle: the one they receive from and the one they pass to.
- As more balls are introduced they need 'to take care' of their team members, making sure they are ready to receive and throwing in a way which helps them to catch.
- Some challenges appear very daunting at the beginning but if you just focus on the bits you have to do first, you are likely to be successful. Each person's contribution is important to achieving the whole big picture.

