

SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) Activities – Chip Candy

1. Snowball – Have the participants write on a plain piece of paper, answering any SEL style starter question(s). As an example, what was your worst day (or best day) in school? Then crumple them up and, while standing in a circle, throw them in the air and try to catch any other snowball other than yours. Read the response on the paper, and re-throw them trying to read as many as possible. It is also fun to write a response on the paper before throwing it again. Other ideas for distributing the snowballs...a. simply pass them around the circle until someone says stop, b. divide the group into 2 teams on either side of a court, gym, net, etc. and throw them back and forth until someone says stop.

2. Altershake (R/L Shake) – Everyone starts shaking hands beginning with either a right-handed shake, or a left-handed shake. The flow must then be back and forth, alternating rights and lefts, not repeating anyone in the group, and shaking the exact goal number set beforehand (we usually shoot for a total of 3 to 5 less than the total group number). Can the group get everyone through it...exactly?

3. What's in a Name? – Invite participants to find a partner and have them share their first, middle and last name, and explain everything they know about the history/story of each part of their full name. What nationality? Where did the name idea(s) come from? Who were they named after? Do they like their name? Nicknames?

4. How Many on a Penny? /Touch My Can/ Frisbee Elimination – Begin with a large number of objects (pennies/cans or cups/Frisbees) on the ground and have everyone touch one of them...all at the same time. When asked to move to another object, one of the objects is eliminated. This continues until the group can no longer fit everyone on the remaining object(s). I have seen as many as 70 people touching 1 Frisbee!

5. Little Green Straw – Have participants gather in a confined area and spread out to cover as much of the space as possible. Once in a spot, no one may move their feet. The leader then explains that everyone is to close their eyes, and a little green straw is going to be hidden in the space. Once the straw is hidden everyone opens their eyes and tries to locate the straw (again, no moving feet). If anyone sees the straw, they simply step out of the area...SILENTLY, and with their best “poker face” possible. As more people move out, it becomes very apparent that where you are standing has everything to do with the ability to see the straw...a great introduction to one's perspective!

6. Bucket Stacking – How high (how many buckets high) can a group of 3 to 6 people stack buckets (or cups) in a straight tower. The tower (also called an obelisk) must be free standing for a slow count of 5. No outside props/equipment may be used. Every team member must stay on the ground. What roles did everyone take in the process?

7. Random Count – A group of between 11 and 15 people scatter in a confined area. Anybody may begin the process by saying ONE, and the counting continues with each person saying a number, in order, with no repeats by anyone. The counting must be random, with no pattern, group organization, signals, or movements allowed to help the process along. If 2 people speak at the same time, the group must start over with a new person saying ONE. If the group is successful, try it again with the alphabet...backwards!

8. You're Out – Groups of 5 to 7 stand in a circle...ready to kick someone out of their "clan". The leader may say; "the oldest in the group". The group must then determine who the oldest in their "clan" is...and they are "kicked out" of the circle. The leader may follow with; "the tallest in the group", and they must exit the circle. This continues until people realize that, a. our group is shrinking (you may want to pull some people who were kicked out, into your group), or b. the people who get "kicked out" realize that they might want to get together and form their own clan. How does it feel to get kicked out? How does it feel to be pulled back in? What can groups do (or not do)?

9. Penny Puzzle – The entire group of participants must connect themselves by touching the provided objects (pennies, washers, Frisbees, chips, etc.) with the following rules:

- a. Three different hands touching each object...no more, no less
- b. Every hand must be used...no free hands
- c. No one may touch two objects with the same person (no repeats)

Once completed, can the group move at least 20 yards without disconnecting?

10. Reverse or Secret Identity – The activity begins with sets of partners, and a list of 3 (or 4) questions/categories that each person will share with that person. An example might be...your first name (always used in this activity), your favorite food, your favorite movie, and the subject you like/liked in school. Once both have shared, we split and move on to a new partner, introducing yourself using the name and information from your previous partner. Each time you split and move to a new person, you take a new identity with you.

11. UBUNTU Cards – Created by Ryan McCormick at High5 Adventures...these cards are a unique way to bring groups together. Instructions/ideas come with each set of 54 cards. Great for ice-breakers, team builders, problem solvers, creating connections, and debriefing.

12. Positive Body Scramble – Using “positive” words, have students use their bodies to spell each word. Groups re-form for each new word and are only allowed to use one person for each letter. Keep switching the words so that the number of letters in each word is constantly creating new groups...example, start with TEAM (4 students), then switch to LEADER (6 students). Other word ideas – EXAMPLE, FAMILY, PLAY HARD, PLAY FAIR, PLAY SAFE, ROLE MODEL, UNITY, GRIT, EMPATHY, LOVE, BOND, UBUNTU, KAIZEN

13. Everybody Up (Get Up, Stand Up) – Begin with partners seated, facing each other, feet flat on the ground, hands grasped. Gently pull each other up into a standing position. How many different people can you cooperatively help up like this?

Can this be done in a group of 3? 4? 5? How many people can do this at one time?

14. What Did You See? (Stop That Crook) – Have someone run into your class in the middle of a game/lesson/teaching “moment”/fitness activity, and loudly interrupt, while stealing 3 objects from class...then quickly leave. Ask the class to describe...IN DETAIL...exactly what they saw. Ask prompting questions like...How tall were they? How long were they in here? What did they take? What color eyes/hair/shirt/shoes/socks did they have? Who did they touch/have contact with? It’s all about **perspective!**

15. Press Conference (Interview and Introduce) – At one end of the playing area, interview your partner (ask questions) for one minute. Then, run to the other end and introduce your partner to some others using the information that you have about them. Run back and switch roles...we want details people, details!

16. Class “Finishers” – Try ending your class with a “bring it in”, or “bring it together” saying that leaves them with a group togetherness feeling...

a. Teacher, “Remember we are a TEAM”. Students respond, “and a FAMILY” (thanks Dave Blackney).

b. Teacher, “Take care of each other”. Students, “1,2,3, Family”

c. Teacher, “Today is (say the date...Tuesday, March 2nd). Students, “Make it a good one” (thanks Nicole Escudero).

d. Teacher, “We Work HARD”. Students, “We Work TOGETHER”.

e. Teacher, “Team on 3, Team on 3...1, 2, 3”. Students, “TEAM”

f. Teacher, “Together we can”. Students, “Together we WILL”.

17. That’s Our Handshake – Picture this...a homerun is hit in Major League Baseball and the batter crosses home plate...let the celebration begin. Of course, there is a handshake with every person in the dugout...and the handshake is different with each person. Every hit, every tackle, every dunk, block, catch, score, steal, etc. is celebrated...so... Make up a 3 to 5-part celebration handshake with your partner...that’s

our handshake! How many people can you make up a handshake with? No partner repeats. No move/handshake repeats. Don't forget any handshakes and don't forget the person you did each one with!

18. Duck and Dive – 3 people hold three scarves between them creating a triangle (circle). The action begins with any one of the 3 ducking (diving) through one of the holes/spaces, creating an inside out triangle. The second person backs up through one of the holes to bring us back to the starting point. The 3rd person ducks/dives through again, creating the facing out triangle. We are now each free to take our scarf, regroup and start over again with 2 new people.

These People Prompts (Fun and SEL)

Using a space with a long line to separate groups, the leader should point to one of the sides of the rope and say, "These people...ex. like broccoli". Whoever likes broccoli stays there. Whoever does not like broccoli moves to the other side of the dividing line. This also works well with a large circle as the dividing boundary.

THESE PEOPLE...

Like broccoli

Speak a second language

Eat breakfast most days

Work hard

Do their homework regularly

Like dessert

Eat fruit regularly

Play an instrument

Read for enjoyment

Read and remember

Are good spellers

Are good at technology

Draw well

Play a sport

Sing in the shower

Eat junk food

Don't mind cold weather

Like fish

Love the USA

Like Rap

Can Laugh at themselves

Laugh at others

Don't mind public speaking

Like snakes

Like where they live

Like the outdoors

Relax easily

Like to nap

Play video games
Like Pizza
Have grit
Own a pet/pets
Like swimming
Love the summer
Love their family
Have been bullied
Like to be hugged
Like to work out
Sleep well

Run for fun
Are critical of themselves
Are critical of others
Are usually late
Are confident
Are risk takers
Drink enough water during the day
Do their own laundry
Make their bed in the morning
Dance
Enjoy life

Starter Questions for “On a Scale of One to Ten...”

Set up cones in a line, numbered 1 – 10, across the space, in order. Ask the group one of the starter “I am” questions. Example- “On a scale of one to ten, I am shy”. Participants move to their level of being “shy”, with 10 as the highest, and 1 the lowest level of “shyness”.

1. I am outgoing
2. I am shy
3. I am athletic
4. I am artistic
5. I am a musician
6. I am a good listener
7. I am funny
8. I love animals
9. I am respectful
10. I am a hard worker
11. I am organized
12. I am good at technology
13. I am a good cook
14. I am healthy/health conscious
15. I am smart/intelligent
16. I enjoy reading
27. I like my teachers
28. I think money is important
29. I like to dance
30. I am argumentative
31. I am creative
32. I think “out of the box”
33. I am eco friendly
34. I care what others say about me
35. I am competitive
36. I have a high pain tolerance
37. I spend too much time on my cell phone
38. I type/keyboard/text fast
39. I like Country Music
40. I am a talker
41. I am a thinker
42. I am a planner

17. I am a leader
18. I am friendly
19. I am thoughtful/considerate of others
20. I am trying to improve every day
21. I have a good attitude
22. I am physically flexible
23. I have a flexible personality
24. I like my school
25. I get picked on/I am a target/I get bullied
26. I am good at...Math, or English, or Science, or History, or a Foreign Language
43. I am honest/trustworthy
44. I am superstitious

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