



Building a Sense of Belonging

Pre-meeting activities

As your members arrive, get them involved and make them feel part of the group. A game or activity that is fun and engages everyone will make people feel welcome, as well as encourage families to arrive on time. For new families, this is a perfect way to get acquainted with other families in the club. Leaders can assign youth leaders to plan and conduct these activities or assign families to the task.

- **Idea generation.** Tape large pieces of paper on the walls around the room. As members arrive, encourage them to list ideas of things they would like to do in the club.
- **Blind creature creation.** Start by folding a piece of paper into three equal sections. One person draws a face in the top section, and then folds the paper down so the next person can't see it and passes it to a second person. That person then draws the midsection of the body, folds down the paper and passes it to the third person who sketches the legs in the bottom section. Finally, unfold the paper and name the creature.
- **Guessing Games**
 - glass jar of pennies - how many?
 - small ball of string - how long?
 - apple - how many seeds?
 - page from a magazine - how many words?
 - stick - how long?
 - large dictionary - how many pages?
 - Part of a deck of cards - how many?
 - photo of a person - how old?)
 - glass jar of flour - how many tablespoons?
 - pumpkin - how much does it weigh?
 - chocolate candies in a jar - how many?
 - nails in a can - how many?
- **Bubble-blowing contest.** Hand out bubble gum and see who can blow the biggest bubble.
- **Melting ice.** Give each team an ice cube and see which team can melt it the quickest (without putting it in anyone's mouth).
- **Play hot potato.** Put on music and pass an uncooked potato until the music stops – whoever is holding the potato is out.
- **Twenty questions.** Think of a person everyone knows (such as a teacher or famous person) and have the 4-Hers ask questions to guess the identity. Whoever guesses leads the next game.

- **Limbo.** Play the limbo with a jump rope or broom stick.
- **Balloon flying.** See how long the group can keep a balloon in the air.
- **Freeze dance.** Turn on the music and dance – turn it off and kids “freeze”. Anyone who moves is out.
- **Coin toss.** Flip a coin until you either get heads or tails five straight times.

Sources:

Making Clubs Welcoming, 2006 Fall Volunteer Training, of Minnesota Extension, Center for Youth Development

Making Clubs Fun, 2005 Fall Volunteer Training, University of Minnesota Extension, Center for Youth Development