

Oklahoma 4-H Youth Development Program

Building Leaders for Tomorrow

Instilling and developing leadership capabilities in youth and adults.

ACTIVITY 14: "Believe it or Not"

AGE LEVEL - Beginning

CONCEPT OR SKILL – Developing responsibility – doing what is right, keeping your word

LIFE SKILL(S) – **Health** – Character; **Hands** – Responsible Citizenship; **Head** – Decision Making

BEHAVIORAL INDICATOR – Youth have limited decision-making abilities, activities should be chosen to ensure early success and build confidence

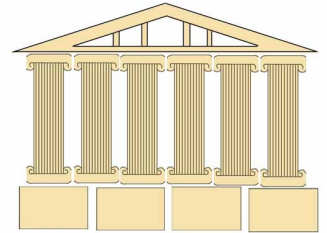
***What is right
is right even if
no one is
doing it.***

***What is
wrong is
wrong even if
everyone is
doing it.***

THINGS TO KNOW:

It can be difficult to share personal information with a group of new people. Shy children are especially hesitant to disclose information to others and may worry about fitting in with the group and forming relationships they can trust. A good volunteer will be able to recognize the youth that may need a little extra time or help in getting comfortable with other club members, plan activities that will include everyone and assist in nurturing relationships between youth.

There are six pillars of character which can help young people establish relationships with family and friends. These pillars help young people make good decisions in all aspects of their lives: athletics, school, work, clubs, place of worship, family, etc.



Trustworthiness

- Be honest.
- Don't deceive, cheat, or steal.
- Be reliable — do what you say o.
- Have courage to do the right thing.
- Build a good reputation.
- Be loyal — stand by your family, friends, and country.

Respect

- Treat others the way you want to be treated.
- Be tolerant of differences.
- Use good manners, not bad language.
- Be considerate of the feelings of others.
- Don't threaten, hit, or hurt anyone.
- Deal peacefully with anger, insults, and disagreements.

Responsibility

- Do what you are supposed to do.
- Persevere; keep on trying!
- Always do your best.
- Be self-disciplined.
- Think before you act — consider the consequences.
- Be accountable for your choices

Fairness

- Play by the rules.
- Take turns and share.
- Be open-minded; listen to others.
- Don't take advantage of others.
- Don't blame others carelessly.

Caring

- Be kind.
- Be compassionate and show you care.
- Express gratitude.
- Forgive others.
- Help people in need.

Citizenship

- Make your school and community better.
- Cooperate.
- Stay informed; vote.
- Be a good neighbor.
- Obey laws and rules and respect authority.
- Protect the environment.

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It's important not to make assumptions or generalizations about individuals or groups of people. This activity will help to illustrate what a unique background and set of experiences each member contributes to a group.

This activity is a great ice breaker for groups just getting to know each other. With directed questions it can be a way to share the diversity within the group. The game will generate conversation and provides a safe experience for youth to disclose interesting information.



Materials Needed: A knotted raccoon circle.

Raccoon Circle - Many of the activities will require that you have a "raccoon circle." A *Raccoon Circle* (concepts and activities developed by Drs. Tom Smith and Jim Cain) is generally a 12-15 foot length of 1" wide tubular webbing, which can be purchased in most camping and sporting goods store. You can find more information and activities that are centered on Raccoon Circles and teambuilding at www.teamworkandteamplay.com



Do: This activity is a good tool for helping members learn about each other, learning how to authenticate information shared by someone and helps one become more comfortable with sharing information. It can also foster a sense of closeness which will benefit the club as a team.

Have the entire group hold a knotted Raccoon Circle. They may be either seated or standing. The knot in the circle will be used to identify the speaker. Begin by passing the knot to the right and stop when someone calls "stop." The person nearest the knot now has the opportunity to disclose an interesting fact about them selves such as "I have traveled to every state in the USA." The remaining members of the group now have the responsibility to decide if they believe the statement to be true or false. When they have made their decision, the original speaker shares the truth behind the statement. When the discussion has ended, the speaker passes the knot either to the right or left, and calls "stop" when the knot lands on a new speaker.

Reflect:

- 1) Did you learn new things about fellow members? What kinds of things?
- 2) Was it easy to decide what to share with the group? How did you make your decision?
- 3) What did it feel like to share something about your self that was being judged by others? Did you like someone making a judgment about what you were saying?
- 4) Were you more comfortable telling the truth or thinking up a falsehood? Did one take more thought and energy than the other?

Apply:

- 1) How often were our assumptions wrong in the game? Can you think of a time when someone assumed something about you and it was wrong? How did you feel when that happened?
- 2) Have you ever made a wrong assumption about someone else? Did the misconception hurt the individual? Was the information based on your experience of what someone said to you? How did you correct the misconception/ understanding?
- 3) In what way can we get to know someone beyond their appearance, school, place of worship, community or home?

Source: Cain, Jim. 2004 "Raccoon Circles: A Guide for Facilitators." Internet Edition.

Resource: Josephson Institute of Ethics. (1996). A report card on American integrity. Marina Del Ray, CA: Josephson Institute of Ethics.