



Oklahoma 4-H Youth Development Program

Building Leaders for Tomorrow

Instilling and developing leadership capabilities in youth and adults.

AGE LEVEL - Beginning

CONCEPT OR SKILL – Teamwork

LIFE SKILL(S) – **Health** – Self-responsibility, self-discipline

Hands – Contributions to Group Effort

BEHAVIORAL INDICATOR – Group and club membership is important and they enjoy symbols and ceremony.

ACTIVITY 5: “Team Hand Squeeze”

THINGS TO KNOW:

Young children respond well to concrete examples and explanations, rather than complicated and abstract ideas. Games are successful when youth can recognize clear goals and work toward challenges that are appropriate to their level of ability. Even simple games can help youth appreciate their own individual importance within a group, while realizing the potential power of a group that works together utilizing the talents of every member.

The following activity works especially well for younger children. It’s a simple exercise that physically shows youth how their contribution to group effort is important for the success of the team.



Materials Needed: Poster board, markers

Do: Have the group connect in a circle, holding hands. Set up the challenge by telling them the “friendship fire” is an energetic ball of light that must touch everyone to stay alive. Their goal is for one person to squeeze the hand of the person next to them so that person can then in turn squeeze the next hand. This continues until the hand squeeze is back with the person that started the squeeze. Have someone time the activity with a stopwatch and see if the group can beat their own time by playing multiple games. Remind the group this is a “friendly” activity and they are not to hurt their neighbor’s hand.

Reflect: Debrief by discussing what the group accomplished. 1) Did the group set a goal? How did you determine the goal? Did everyone buy in with enthusiasm? 2) Why do you think the goal was (was not) accomplished? 3) How would the outcome have been different if one person decided they weren’t going to try their hardest? Maybe the time difference would have only been a few seconds, but the group would not be performing to their best ability. 4) How do the actions of one individual affect the success of others? 5) Does everyone have the same capabilities and skills? What does this mean to group effort?

Apply: 1) Think about successful experiences. What made the difference? 2) What are ways we can be reminded that a group succeeds best when everyone in the group is contributing their best effort? 3) How can we use our different talents, skill levels and capabilities toward the group? 4) What are ways we can make everyone feel their skills and talents are important to the group? It’s often a good idea with younger groups to provide them with a visual aid; have the group decorate a poster with their beginning time and each time more successful than the previous timed effort. Display the poster so that they have a constant reminder of what they can achieve as a team.

Source: Unknown