

Socially Distanced Game Ideas

Playing games in a group is a great way to build relationships and strengthen bonds. During 'socially distanced' gatherings a well chosen game can help to break down the tension and awkwardness that the current social distancing measures can sometimes create. When leading the games try to make sure that everyone (who wants to be is) involved as this models something to the group and helps to create a sense of unity. Below are a list of games which should work well in a socially distanced group of between 4-15 people (which is handy given current group number limits!):

Hi, my name is...

This is a good game to get to know the group a bit and it tests people's memory. Have a leader go first, they say "hi my name is..." and then say a short fact about themselves. The next person in the circle then follows suit, but adds in what the person before has said. This builds with each person in the circle having to remember more and more things. End with the leader who started and see if they can get everyone.

Purple Kingdom

It's the same as Psychiatrist but in reverse – one person comes up with a rule about what can enter the 'Purple Kingdom'. For example, the rule could be that the object has to start with the same letter as the person's first name. The person who came up with the rule (say if they were called Bob) could then say "I can get into the Purple Kingdom with bananas". Taking it in turns, the others (who don't know the rule) ask if they can get into the purple kingdom with something. For example: "Can I get into the Purple Kingdom with sheep?" would be answered by either yes or no, depending on who is asking. Keep asking questions until someone thinks they've figured out the rule, which they can guess on their turn. The rule can be anything, but obviously make it guessable!

Manner of Adverb

Works like psychiatrist, except the volunteer is sent out and the rest of the group pick an adverb, e.g. slowly. When the volunteer returns to the room they have to pick some members of the group to act out a scene of their choosing, e.g. going to the shops to buy bread. The chosen people then have to act out the scene in the manner of that adverb, as in going to the shops to buy bread, slowly. The volunteer has 3 guesses to work out what the adverb is. Remember, even when acting, people need to stay 2 metres apart.

Never Have I Ever

Depending on your group, you may or may not want to play this game as it is often played as a drinking game. It is however a fun way to find out more about each other in your group. Everyone has a number of lives (either 5 or 10) signified by holding up fingers. The aim of the game is to eliminate everyone else by saying things you have never done, that they have. Choose one person to start, they then "never have I ever..." naming something they have never done (such as traveled abroad). Everyone who has done that thing then loses a life and puts a finger down. You can either play just to get a winner (who eliminates everyone else) or you can play that the first person out has to do a forfeit (only do the second option if it works with the dynamic of your group without being mean).

Socially distanced staring tournament

Split your group into pairs. Each pair sits or stands opposite each other (2 meters apart). Like a normal staring competition the first person to blink is out. Each person who wins pairs off with another person who won (people who lost can also pair off with another person who lost). Keep going until you run out of time or you have a definitive winner.

Splat

Have your group stand in a circle (2 meters apart). One person is selected as the 'splatter' to stand in the middle. The splatter spins round and randomly points at someone in the circle and shouts splat. This person must then duck and the people either side of the 'ducker' have to point at each other and shout splat. You are out if you don't duck after the person in the middle points at you or if you are the last person to shout 'splat' when someone next to you ducks. When you get to the final 2 people, they stand facing away from each other (2 meters apart). The 'splatter' nominates a 'trigger word' (such as splat for example). They then shout different words and each time they do the 2 remaining players take a step forward. When the 'splatter' shouts the trigger word the other two players have to spin around and 'splat' each other. The first person to do this is the winner!

Psychiatrist

One person is the psychiatrist. They need to 'leave the room', or go somewhere they can't hear. The other players need to decide a rule which will determine how they answer questions. For example, the rule can be "answer yes if you're a boy, answer no if you're a girl". When the psychiatrist comes in, they ask questions to anybody to try and work out what the rule is. It's a big favourite and works well as people can drop out if needs be (as long as they aren't the Psychiatrist!).

Wink Murder

An old classic, one person is chosen to be the detective and then sent away. While the detective is gone the group decides on a murderer. The detective comes back. The murderer then tries to subtly wink at other members of the group in order to kill them. Anyone who is winked at has to perform a 'dramatic death'. You could make it more active by having different movements to kill people other than winking (such as standing up while looking at them) .

Mafia

This is a long one to describe. For a good but slightly cheesy write up, please see [here](#) .

Two truths and a lie

Everyone thinks of two truths and a lie about themselves. Taking it in turns, probably starting with whoever has actually finished writing theirs, they tell their two truths and a lie. The other players have to try and guess which is the lie, which is then revealed. You can mix up as many lies or truths as you want.

Simon says

This one is an old classic... One person is designated Simon, the others are the players. Standing in front of the group, Simon tells players what they must do. However, the players must only obey commands that begin with the words "Simon Says." If Simon says, "Simon says touch your nose," then players must touch their nose. But, if Simon simply says, "jump," *without* first saying "Simon says," players must not jump. Those that do jump are out.

Funny relay races

Split your group into 2 or 3 teams and have them sit as a relay team behind a cone (separated two metres). Set up a second cone for each team 8-12 metres away. Do relay races using any funny/unusual movements you can think of such as:

- crab walk
- army crawl
- cartwheels
- forward rolls
- hop on one foot
- jump using two feet

Each person performs the locomotion movement as far as the cone, then they run back to their team and sit down.

Press ups/sit ups/balancing competition

This, like many other challenges, depends on the dynamic of your group. They might be a good warm up activity. It doesn't have to be one of the challenges listed above, but you could just run a quick physical challenge.

Rock paper scissors tournament

Pair off each member of the group and have them play a round of rock paper scissors (standing 2m apart). The winner from every pair plays a winner from another pair, until you have a final. The winner is the person who wins all of their games.

Code breaker

This is a game I have not played. It requires some prep but looks fun. For full instructions follow the link below:

https://activeforlife.com/content/uploads/2020/06/AfL_summer-camp-games-physical-distancing_codebreaker.pdf

The Conductor game

Everyone is sitting in the circle, one person is chosen as a volunteer. They go out of the room. While they are out of the room, one person is chosen to be the 'conductor', what they do everyone else must copy. The conductor then starts doing an action (for example, clapping) and everyone else joins in. The volunteer comes in and stands in the middle of the circle. They then have to guess who it is who is leading the group!

Sorry I'm late but

One person says "Sorry I'm late" then describes (loosely) something a character did in a film. For example, "Sorry I'm late, I've been trapped in the jungle for 26 years". If someone guesses the film correctly (Jumanji), they say their sentence next. Eventually someone might run out of films and then whoever has one can say theirs. You can also play by just describing a film and guessing the film, although you need to be loose in your description to make it hard.

Pass the signal

This game works a bit like psychiatrist only, it's more active. Send one person away and while they are gone the rest of the group chooses a signal and how it needs to be passed. It could be:

- Winking at someone with whom you are making eye contact
- Pointing at someone with your foot.
- Assigning everyone a number and you clap their number of times

Whatever you choose there needs to be a clear way to ensure the person who receives the signal knows it is meant for them (try to avoid signals that involve something like coughing). The person in the middle has to try and guess who the signal is at before they pass it on to someone else.

G'day Bruce

Again, depending on your group you may not want to play this one as it is sometimes played as a drinking game. Sit in a socially distanced circle. Going clockwise, the first player says to the player on their left 'G'Day Bruce'. After that player replies, the first one gestures to the next person along and says 'Say G'Day to Bruce, Bruce' and the pattern starts again with the 2nd player.

Obviously, it can get a bit confusing. It goes on like this until someone messes up (e.g, taking too long to respond, saying the wrong thing, using the wrong name, et cetera) and then their name changes to something else. In most games, the hierarchy is like this: Bruce - Steve - Gazza - Sheila - Norman. So when a Bruce messes up, their name turns to Steve, when a Steve messes up they become a Gazza, et cetera et cetera. Everyone in the circle has to keep track of everyone's names, which gets very confusing very quickly. When someone becomes a Norman, if they mess up, they're out of the game for good. If you want to make the game shorter, just have fewer names.

Higher or lower

This game is deliberately silly and low effort. One member of the group has a deck of cards and then shows the top one. Going round the circle they have to guess if the next card will be higher or lower. If they get it right they stay in, if not they go out. The trick to making it fun is to deliberately hype it up and get other members of the group to chip in while someone else is guessing, with the leaders asking 'are you sure' as if the decision is important. This is a good game for when people are really tired as it is all chance and requires little movement or brain power.

Hopefully there should be something here you can play with your group, however if you would like themed ideas for a specific evening, or you can't find anything here that works with your group dynamic, please feel free to get in touch with one of the Youth and Childrens team for a chat about some ideas that might work for you...

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