



BLOWIN' IN THE WIND!

ACTIVITY THEME: CONFIDENCE BUILDING

Overcoming Obstacles® Life Skills Curriculum

Quite often, the words of others help us believe in our abilities as an individual. *Blowin' in the Wind!* gives students the opportunity to encourage their peers in a team setting, where strong communication skills and the ability to mainstream positive attitude in a challenging situation are key elements for success.

The Overcoming Obstacles Life Skills Program is full of success stories. To learn more about our middle school and high school programs, please call us toll free at 877-840-9606 or visit www.overcomingobstacles.org.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES LIFE SKILLS CURRICULUM

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ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE:

By participating in a team competition, students develop an understanding of personal strengths, the benefit of taking on new challenges, and the importance of helping others.

TIME ESTIMATE: 15 minutes

REQUIRED MATERIALS: An inflated balloon or plastic bag for each team of 3-4 students, straw for each student, masking tape, a clock/timer

PROCEDURE:

- Begin a discussion with students about the concept of “trying.” Prompt them with the following questions:
 - Why is it important to try new things?
 - Have you ever tried something but been unsuccessful? What was it and how did that feel?
 - Why do you think some people find it hard to try new things?
 - What things were you nervous to try for the first time?
 - Do you feel bad about yourself if you do not master something on the first try? Should you or should you not feel this way?
 - Do you believe in the saying “If at first you don’t succeed, try again?”
- Following the discussion, explain to the students that they will now engage in a team activity that will require them to use many different skills in a very challenging situation. Inform the students that their ability to adapt quickly to the challenges of this situation, both as individuals and as a team, will ultimately lead them closer to success.
- Form students into teams of three to five. When all the students are in teams, distribute one balloon (or plastic bag) to each team, and one straw to each student. Remind students to listen carefully as you explain the rules.

RULES

- Each group will attempt to keep their balloon in the air by having each player blow air through the straw. The team that can keep their balloon in the air for the longest amount of time will be the winner. There will be five rounds of competition.
- The balloon cannot touch anything! It must be kept in the air at all times only by blowing through the straws. If the balloon touches any object or the floor, that team is out for the rest of that round.



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- Players are allowed to sacrifice themselves for their team by catching the balloon before it touches another object and then throwing it in the air to save their team from elimination. However, once they have released the balloon, they are out of the game for the rest of that round.
- Before you begin, make sure the space you will conduct the activity in is as open as possible. You may want to mark an area on the floor for each team with masking tape and state that the team must keep their game play within that space or lose a player if they break the boundary.
- When all the teams are ready, begin the activity.
- Throughout the activity, observe the way students work as a team to accomplish the goal. Use your observations as you debrief the activity with the questions below.

DEBRIEF:

Ask the students:

- What specific skills did you need to use in order to be successful?
- What was challenging about this activity?
- Did your group devise a strategy for success before starting the activity? What, if anything, would you have done differently?
- How did you communicate with your teammates? Did your teammates encourage you to succeed?
- Did anyone sacrifice themselves for their team? Have you ever made a sacrifice to help someone else?
- Did your group work well as a team? Did anyone emerge as a leader?
- Can anyone create a connection between this activity and a challenge you have faced in your own life?
- How do you approach new challenges in your life? With excitement? Apprehension?
- Why is it important to plan ahead when trying to reach a challenging goal?