Jump into January! (26 minutes)

Items needed for this activity:
- Masking Tape
- Top Banana List

Background information for presenter:
Games that can be played with a group are a very important part of youth development. Youth learn both cooperation and competition through a variety of games in which they participate. Games are best taught when they are introduced as an opportunity to have fun and to share.

Games that are used in a club or group setting can be positive learning experiences when the focus is on skill development, group interaction and willingness to include and involve all youth.

This activity guide outlines games that can be adult and/or youth initiated. Many of these are best suited for indoors, and can be a great way for youth to be physically active in a group setting when the weather is not conducive to outdoor play.

Step 1: Information to share with club members (1 minute)
Today we are going to play some group games that will help us increase our level of physical activity. These will be fairly “active” games, so it is important that everyone listen to the directions and then follow the rules for the games. We also want everyone to be respectful of each other. We will have an area that we are playing in, please stay in the designated area. We are playing this for fun and to be active!

Step 2: Group Activity (15 minutes)
Streets and Alleys: Prior to the activity, identify a large area to play the game. This will need to be an open area that has enough space that youth can form a grid with an arms length of spacing between each participant.
- Choose one participant to be the “cat” and another to be the “mouse.”
- Have the remaining participants stand in even rows of four youth or more. They should stand so that they can touch hands when they hold their arms up, extending them toward the participants to their left and right.
- Explain that when their arms are held up, touching palms with the person on the left and right of them, they are in STREET formation. This means the participants are looking forward, making horizontal rows.
- To make the ALLEYS, they must turn sideways and hold up their arms, touching palms with the person in front of or behind them. This means the participants are now facing sideways, making vertical rows.
- The game leaders (which can be an adult or a designated youth) will call out “Streets” or “Alleys”. When they do this, the participants must form that configuration. For example, if they are facing forward, in a STREET configuration, the leader will call ALLEY. This is the signal that the participants should quickly turn to face sideways, making vertical rows, or be in an ALLEY configuration. It doesn’t matter which way they turn to form the Alleys. The leader should call “Streets” and “Alleys” several times as a practice until the youth understand what to do and can change quickly.
To begin the game, the CAT starts inside the first street and the MOUSE stands inside the back street.

The leader calls “begin” and the cat chases the mouse. Both the cat and the mouse must stay inside the streets.

After a minute or so, the leader calls “ALLEYS,” and the youth quickly switch to form alleyways. Again the cat and mouse must stay within the alleys.

This continues until the cat tags the mouse. Once the mouse has been tagged, two new players should be selected to be cat and mouse.

Step 3: Group Activity (10 minutes)

Oranges/Colds/Energy: This game is based on the “Rock/Scissors/Paper” game.

Prior to the activity, identify a large area to play the game. Create a “center line” with masking tape on the floor in the middle of the playing area. Use more masking tape to identify two “free zones” at opposite ends of the playing area. While in that area, team members cannot be tagged.

Divide the participants into two teams. Send each team to their “free zone,” explaining that while in this area, a team member is safe and cannot be tagged.

Explain that they will be playing a game similar to Rock/Paper/Scissors – however since we are focusing on the Fruit Group of MyPyramid this month, we are adapting the game. In this game, ORANGES crush COLDS; COLDS cut into our ENERGY; and ENERGY requires more ORANGES.

The signs for each are as follows:

Oranges = closed fist; Colds = fingers spread out; Energy = flat hand, fingers together.

Each team should huddle in their free zone and decide as a group which sign they are going to show (ORANGES, COLDS, ENERGY).

Remind them, oranges crush colds, colds cut into our energy, and energy requires more oranges.

Once the teams have decided on a sign, all of the members of each team meet at the center line and face each other.

The leader counts 1-2-3, then each team shows their sign.

The team that shows the winning sign chases the other team, trying to tag as many players as possible. The team with the weaker sign must run back to their free zone, trying not to be tagged.

In case of a tie (both teams showing the same sign), the teams must go back into a huddle and choose a new symbol.

Anyone who is tagged joins the other team.

The game continues until one of the teams is out of players.

Step 4: Group Activity (5 minutes)

The Top Banana Says…: This game is based on the “Simon Says” game.

For each of the statements that the “Top Banana” says, the other participants should do the exercise or movement. Remind participants they ONLY do the movement if the statement is started with “the Top Banana says.” If they do the movement or exercise when the statement WAS NOT started with “the Top Banana says,” they must sit down.

A list of statements is provided that can be used – or you can come up with your own statements.

Explain to the participants that in many cases they will be pretending to do the exercise. Encourage them to be active when doing the movements – for example run in place, skip, hop, etc.

NOTE – you may not trick all of the participants, which is great. That means they participated in all of the movements and exercises!

Get Up & Move!