

Icebreaker: “Otter steals the fish”

Target Audience: Children ages 4-16 or very enthusiastic adults.

Time to play: Apx. 10 minutes.

Difficulty level: Easy.

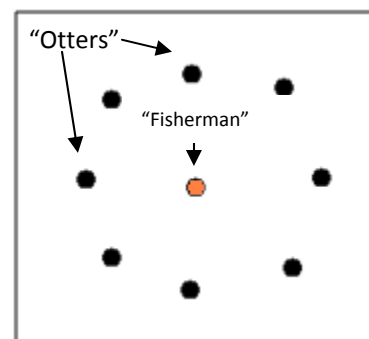
Required Materials: Handkerchief or soft object

Overview

Otter steals the fish is designed to create familiarity and comfort within a group through low-risk competition. To play the game, the facilitator has the group form a circle with him/her in the center. Participants should stand fingertip to fingertip with their arms outstretched and then take two steps backwards in order to determine the appropriate playing area for the group. This game may require fast movement and the participants will have to step backwards during the game so make sure that the area is free from hazards.

How to play:

- The “fisherman” stands in the center of the circle with the handkerchief, placing it on the ground when he or she is ready to play.
- Once the fisherman drops the handkerchief he/she may not interact with it in any way.
- The game starts when the handkerchief is dropped.
- At will, participants (henceforth known as “otters”) try to steal the handkerchief from under the fisherman. An otter that manages to remove the handkerchief from the circle becomes the new fisherman.
- If the fisherman tags an otter at any time, the otter must take three giant steps backwards before trying to steal the handkerchief again.
- Game ends at the facilitator’s discretion. Try to let everyone have a change in the middle before ending the game.



Variant:

- For a tougher challenge, otters that get tagged must freeze in position until either the handkerchief is successfully stolen or everyone is frozen.

Suggestions for managing the game:

- Otters tend to crowd in on the fisherman. If this happens ask everyone to take a few steps back.
- Diving and jumping leads to collisions and bumping. Encourage sneakiness and stealth from the onset in order to counteract this issue.
- The game goes on too long. Watch the energy of your group and be ready to transition to the next activity if you notice their attention beginning to flag.



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