



Dear Families,

Here are some of our favorite teambuilding activities and other games, which we have adjusted to work best in your home. We hope that these encourage you to be active together and grow closer, helping you to have some fun and relieve some stress. Parents, you can set up and lead these activities, but your kids can do a great job being leaders too.

We tried to design these to include things you already have at home, and to explain it well, but feel free to make changes or make up your own rules. Take time to ensure you have a safe area - check the floor and your surroundings so that you won't step on something accidentally or fall and get hurt.

General instructions for leaders:

- Leaders can be parents or kids. Give them a shot!
 - Teambuilding activities do just that - they help build a team. It's not just a game, though it can be fun. It's not just a test, though it can help you grow and learn. It's a combination of both of those.
 - Don't make it feel like a job - focus on the fun elements, the challenge of getting it done together, and make sure you celebrate ANY victory you have - certainly completing the activity, but also getting close, getting closer than last time, communicating well, helping someone else, and more.
 - Use the opportunities during each activity to talk with your family about how their actions and attitude affect others, or how everyone can communicate better. Spend more time talking about positive experiences and about "how can we do better next time" than about negative experiences - and remember to use "us" and "we" instead of "you" whenever possible.
 - Finally, make up a story for any activity. Pretend you're in a magical land with a river of hot chocolate. Let everyone pick a superhero name and a superpower. Imagine what it would be like to travel to the future or back to the past.
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The Upsidedown Island

Materials: blanket, sheet, or tarp
Time: 5-10 minutes for one round

Make sure you have an open, safe area to do this activity in. Clean up the floor, check for furniture, lights, windows, and anything else around that could break or injure someone. Adjust the location, objective, or elements in the activity if needed.

1. Place the blanket, sheet, or tarp in an open area on the floor and have everyone stand on it.
2. Without touching the floor, turn the blanket over and keep everyone on the "island."
3. If you want to have a second round, you can increase the challenge by starting with a smaller "island" or by timing yourselves.

The Shrinking Island

Materials: blanket, sheet, or tarp
Time: 5-10 minutes for one round

Make sure you have an open, safe area to do this activity in. Clean up the floor, check for furniture, lights, windows, and anything else around that could break or injure someone. Adjust the location, objective, or elements in the activity if needed.

1. Place the blanket, sheet, or tarp in an open area on the floor and have everyone stand on it.
2. Ask your family "How many times do you think we can fold this in half and still fit?" Let everyone guess and then pick a goal.
3. Get off the blanket, fold it in half, and then get back on. You can hold on to each other, use only one foot, stack yourselves - get creative but don't touch the ground off the tarp!
4. Repeat folding and fitting. When you finally can't fit, discuss how it got harder and what you did to try to succeed each time.



The Spiderweb

Materials: string or tape; doorway or two poles or pieces of large furniture

Time: 5-10 minutes for one round

Make sure you have an open, safe area to do this activity in. Clean up the floor, check for furniture, lights, windows, and anything else around that could break or injure someone. Adjust the location, objective, or elements in the activity if needed.

1. In a doorway, place several pieces of tape across the open doorway at various angles. Leave large spaces between the tape. The tape should look somewhat like a spiderweb. If using two poles (like porch or carport supports) you can use tape or string. You can try using furniture like a tall couch, windowsill, etc. Be especially careful if you are using anything that can fall on you or something else.
2. Have everyone in your family try to get through the spiderweb without touching it. If someone touches it they go to the back of the line and wait to try again.
3. If you want to do a second round, you can increase the challenge by doing it blindfolded, going backwards, or making each person use a different hole in the spiderweb.

Ants on a Log

Materials: masking tape

Time: 5-10 minutes for one round

Make sure you have an open, safe area to do this activity in. Clean up the floor, check for furniture, lights, windows, and anything else around that could break or injure someone. Adjust the location, objective, or elements in the activity if needed.

1. Place a strip of tape on the floor, about 18" per person playing.
2. Have everyone line up on the tape. Look at each other and remember the order you are in.
3. Without stepping on the floor away from the tape, switch the order everyone is standing in. (Instead of being arranged ABCD, stand in the order of DCBA.)
4. If you want to have a second round, you can increase the challenge by having some people be blindfolded, placing an obstacle on the tape, or by shrinking the tape one foot at a time.



The Human Knot

Materials: bandanas if desired

Time: 10-15 minutes for one round

Note: this activity works better with 5-10 people.

Make sure you have an open, safe area to do this activity in. Clean up the floor, check for furniture, lights, windows, and anything else around that could break or injure someone. Adjust the location, objective, or elements in the activity if needed.

1. Stand in a small circle, nearly side-by-side. Everyone should close their eyes and put one hand into the circle; bring your other hand in and grab someone else's hand. Everyone should now be holding two hands.
2. Alternate start: Stand in a small circle, nearly side-by-side. Hold a bandana (or washcloth, short string, etc) in one hand. Everyone should close their eyes and put their hand with the bandana in the circle; bring your other hand in and grab someone else's bandana. Everyone should now be holding two bandanas.
3. Open your eyes. Carefully try to "untangle" yourselves so that you are forming a circle.
4. Using the bandanas gives you extra flexibility in trying to untangle, especially if you have people who have very different heights.

Blindfolded Mission: Impossible

Materials: blindfold, several smallish items

Time: 5-10 minutes for one round

Make sure you have an open, safe area to do this activity in. Clean up the floor, check for furniture, lights, windows, and anything else around that could break or injure someone. Adjust the location, objective, or elements in the activity if needed.

1. Prepare an open space to use, maybe 10' square.
2. Choose one person to be the Special Agent and have them go into another room while everyone else sets up the scenario.
3. Set up two items that the Special Agent needs, and two or more that they need to avoid.
4. Blindfold the Special Agent and bring them back into the room. Use your voices to calmly give them directions on where they should walk and what they should pick up. Avoid the obstacles on the floor - three strikes and you're out!
5. If you want to have a second round, you can increase the challenge by having the Special Agent pick up items in a specific order, or deliver items to different locations. You can use different objects for them to pick up or as obstacles - different combinations can be harder or easier, or even funnier.



Chocolate River

Materials: start/finish line, clean socks or washcloths

Time: 10-20 minutes for one round depending on length

Make sure you have an open, safe area to do this activity in. Clean up the floor, check for furniture, lights, windows, and anything else around that could break or injure someone. Adjust the location, objective, or elements in the activity if needed.

1. Pick a start and finish line. You can put tape on the ground, use the edge of the carpet or a rug, or line it up with furniture or any item. The farther the distance, the harder the activity, so we suggest picking around 10-15' for your first challenge.
2. You have to cross the "chocolate river" using your "marshmallows" to float on the river. Use small items for marshmallows that won't break or rip when you step on them - clean socks or washcloths work well. The fewer the items the harder the activity, so we suggest starting with about two marshmallows per person.
3. Travel between the start and stop by only touching the marshmallows and not the floor. But remember that the marshmallows dissolve if no one is touching them - don't let go of one before the next person is still touching it.
4. You will end up with a train of people that are all on the marshmallows - make sure you are always waiting for the person behind you!
5. If you want to have a second round, you can increase the challenge by having a farther route (or even going out and back on the same route), fewer marshmallows, or by placing obstacles in the way (like having to go around a corner or a chair). You can also have someone do this blindfolded.



These are some other activities we think would be good for families. We love doing these here and think that you will also love them at home.

- **Zip-Bong:** Everyone is in a circle. The object of the game is to go the longest without showing your teeth. If you show your teeth even once you are out. There are only two words that can be said: “Zip” and “Bong.” Zip gets passed around the circle from one person to the next in order, but when someone decides to say “bong!” The direction of the zip reverses, and then is passed around the circle in the opposite direction...until someone says “bong” again of course, which makes the direction switch again, and so-on and so-forth.
- **Statues:** One person is a “museum security guard” and everyone else is a statue in the museum. When the guard is not looking, you *must* be moving, but if you are caught moving you are out. Last one left gets to be the next guard.
- **Ranger Rick:** Students silently pick an animal, and Ranger Rick calls out a characteristic (“If your animal has wings/four legs/can swim, etc.). Students whose animals have these characteristics must run from one side of an area to another between two trees (players) without being tagged. If they are tagged, they become Rangers too and try to tag animals. Last animal left becomes Ranger Rick for the next round. Best to play outside but can be played, walking, inside.
- **Slow-motion Tag:** You can have more than one person be “it” for this game, and pick one game ‘leader.’ Everyone can move only one step at a time, and everyone takes that step at the same time when the game leader says ‘step.’ When you are tagged you are frozen until someone unfreezes you.
- **Finger Grab Story (Circle Style):** Everyone should stand in a circle with their right palm out in front of the person to their right, and their left index finger in the palm of the person to their left. There is one person telling a story, and whenever he or she says the “key word” (e.g. “mountain,”) everyone must try and grab the person’s finger that is in their palm, while trying to keep their own finger from being grabbed at the same time. Use “fake out” words to trick others for additional fun.

Sample story: I have a friend who is a famous MOUNTAIN climber. He has traveled all over the world climbing MOUNTAINS. One day he went to Switzerland to climb the huge HILLS there. He was driving up to the MOUNTAIN when his car stopped. He got out and saw that his tire was flat. He knew he needed it fixed so he could go e the MOUNTAIN. He started to get the spare tire out and heard an awful noise behind him. He looked and saw an animal with claws and whiskers and tall ears - it was a REALLY BIG CAT. Yes, a MOUNTAIN lion. Luckily he had some soda in the car and scared it away by throwing a bottle of MOUNTAIN Dew. Then he was able to change the tire and drive the rest of the way to the top of the BIG HILL. ...I mean MOUNTAIN.