

## Games with Purpose



### By Randy Nathan

There are five factors to consider when playing games: Purpose, Setting and Environment, Level of Intensity, Safety and Participation and Clear and Simple Directions. When identifying the “perfect” game, the first issue that must be addressed is the purpose of the game and the end result one wishes to achieve. Second, one must decide what is the best Setting and Environment for the game. Third, the Level of Intensity must always be considered as it could have a dramatic impact on the success of the game. Fourth, the group’s Safety and Participation must be analyzed from both a physical and emotional standpoint. And fifth, Clear and Simple Directions must be provided to ensure everyone participating understands the rules, levels of expectations and boundaries in which to have fun.

Here are several games your staff should keep in mind when programming for their campers this upcoming summer.

**Fashion Show:** Divide the campers into groups of five or six. Each group is given a batch of newspaper and a roll of tape. Using their creativity, each group must select one person and create a fashion design only using the supplies provided. Create a runway and have each model walk down to music as laughter fills the room!

**Balloosball:** Using an entire room, everyone can play this game at once. Put markers on the floor in a straight line on opposite sides of the room. The markers form the boundaries on both sides and mark where the groups will line up. Have groups of five to 10 campers line up at each spot marker, facing the field of play and the marker across the field. Staying within that line, have them spread out and sit cross-legged on the floor. Each row faces the opposite direction of the row behind/in front of them to create a “Foosball Style” look. Using various size beach balls or balloons, teams score points when they hit the balloon over the last row. Each person may only make contact by sitting down.



**Don’t Lose Your Marbles:** Using a large 50 to 100-foot rope, create a giant circle on the floor. Have a group of campers line up around the circle and hand out one tennis ball to each person. Place various size beach balls in the centre of the circle. The object is to get the beach balls (marbles) out of the circle as quickly and efficiently as possible. Round 1, get all of the marbles out of the circle (not a race); Round 2, get the hang of the game and race against the clock; Round 3, beat the original clocked time; and Round 4, the group must get all of the small marbles out of the circle, followed by the biggest one.

*Randy Nathan is a certified empowerment coach, who works exclusively with high school and college-aged students. He has been a guest presenter at the Tri-State Camp Conference and has led numerous workshops at various day and residential camps within the Northeast United States.*

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