

Hoops
(Navigating Social Circles)

Purpose: To increase student awareness of their individual role and responsibilities in collective mass movements from one place to another.

Materials: Whistle and 5 hula hoops of varying colors or markings and adequate floor space.

Student Materials: None required.

Time: 20 minutes

Key Concepts: Social responsibility, group awareness and individual accountability.

Introduce/reintroduce: Make sure the kids know who you are and why you're there. Start off with something that gives a non direct clue about the lesson being presented today. A reference to traffic, "crazy drivers," parking, school traffic or barely avoiding a collision shopping in Target/Walmart will do.

Part 1:

Tell: Students we will be doing a counseling activity that in part will help them better understand a reason why some people will go talk with a counselor.

Begin: By placing the five hula hoops in a circle/star formation not to exceed 15 feet in diameter in an open area of the classroom that also allows the other kids to watch.

Recruit: Individually (one by one) gather 15 volunteers to occupy the five hoops. There should be three people per hoop. Everyone should start by facing towards the center of the five hoop circle/star formation. Be sure to avoid calling up and grouping kids together. What to avoid example: You three stand in the green hoop and you three in the blue hoop. You want to make it sound as if this is an individual activity.

Announce: This is going to be an activity where each one of you can prove how well you can do by following directions and moving quickly.

Direction #1: Explain that at the sound of the first whistle students are to move to another colored hoop before the second (double whistle) blows without moving outside the outer perimeter of the formation. (Having students facing inwards towards the center of the circle/star design at the beginning of the activity will encourage lots of cross traffic.)

Announce: Each of you are on your own and at no time can you end up with more than three people in any hoop when the double whistle blows.

Sound: The Whistle.

Wait: 3-5 seconds.

Sound: The double whistle.

State: Let's see how everyone did (Monitor safety and hoop numbers.)

Direction #2: Explain that at the sound of the next first whistle students are to move to another colored hoop that they have not been in yet. That is, once you've been to a colored hoop...you cannot go back to it...ever. Remember, you cannot go outside the formation and no more than three people can be in a hoop when the double whistle blows.

Sound: The whistle.

Wait: 2-3 Seconds.

Sound: The double whistle a little bit quicker this time and if possible, catch someone between the hoops. If you do catch someone, keep them in the game.

Monitor: Safety without giving them specific directions other than no running & be careful.

Repeat: Procedure a third time.

Repeat: Procedure a fourth time (no other hoops left to get to without repeating.)

Encourage: A round of applause for the volunteers.

Have: Those volunteer having just participated return to their seats.

Evaluate: How well that activity went with everyone doing their own individual thing. (Basically pretty good but also lots of bumping, pushing, shoving, dodging, random & unpredictable movements.)

Part 2:

Recruit: New volunteers (15) to fill each of the hoops (3 each.) It's important to get as many people to participate in mental health activities as possible. If you're working with smaller numbers of students use fewer hoops and or students per hoop.

Announce: We're doing the activity again with the same goal of getting to new hoops but this time each person is going to act as a member of the group and not as an individual.

Brainstorm: With new group members how they can accomplish this goal of moving together and not against one another. (You may have to *suggest* or *encourage* student thinking about moving together in a clockwise or counter clockwise rotation to the next hoop.)

Have: Students demonstrate the new & improved “Social Strategy” of mass movement by moving all together in a clockwise rotation to the next hoop at the sound of the whistle.

Repeat: 3 times until all hoops have been used and students have been in all colored hoops (stop short of their original starting place.)

Gather: Applause for that group of volunteers and have those students return to their seats.

Evaluate: How well the group activity went with everyone being mindful of the social strategy for success.

Identify: How people moved together, in the same direction, predictable, safe & secure with everyone knowing what the plan for movement was. Highlight that there was no pushing, no shoving, no bumping, no dodging, no getting knocked down, etc.

Part 3:

Talk: With the kids about moving from one class to another when the bell rings or going to recess, lunch & library.

Ask: How many of you ever bumped into somebody or got bumped into by someone while going to recess, lunch or library?

Ask: Did anyone ever get hurt?

Gather: Student responses.

Remind: Students that safety is always a concern whenever large groups of people begin to move around.

Ask: Students to identify other places where lots of people come together and create movement (in and out of their classroom, cafeteria, gym, multi purpose room, parking lots, grocery stores, intersections, highways, etc.)

Draw: The comparison of having driven to their school today (opening statement) and what it was like avoiding drivers who were doing their own thing of cutting through parking lots, making U-turns in the middle of the road, running stop signs and not sharing the road very safely with other drivers, bicyclers, and walkers.

Advise: Students of their personal responsibility in group movement. That it's important to follow the rules of no running, pushing or shoving, staying on sidewalks, no taking short cuts or creating problems for others who are following the flow of movement.

Remind: Students of how well the activity went today when everyone knew where to go, how to get there and what they were supposed to do when moving from one place to another.

Encourage: Students to seek out some extra help from their counselor if they ever find themselves having (creating) accidents or getting into trouble because of their choice to do things their own way when around other people.