

# TEN TRANSITION OR WAIT TIME GAMES FOR SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN



*By Gretchen Yeager, Director of Quality and Accreditation, Champions-KU and NAA Board Member*

Keeping kids entertained can be one of the toughest jobs. Some like to do one thing while others like to do something else. Making sure everyone is satisfied is difficult, but with a large arsenal of fun, interactive games, you'll be sure to keep all the kids moving and involved, begging to play them again and again. Check out these great transition/wait time games to make you and your kids happy.

- 1 BACKWARDS** – Write a word backwards one letter at a time. Children try to guess what the word is.
- 2 REASSEMBLE** – One person is “it”; the other children stand in a certain order. Children mix up and “it” puts them back in order.
- 3 FROGS & FLIES** – The frog catcher leaves the room. Everyone else picks a frog. The frog gets to stick his or her tongue out at everyone. If the frog sticks their tongue out at you, you fall over. The frog catcher returns to the room and has to “catch” the frog.
- 4 ACT OUT A MACHINE** – Act out a machine and everyone guesses what you are.
- 5 BLOB** – Pretend you are forming something in your hands from a pliable blob. Children guess what it is.
- 6 THREE THE SAME** – Pick three people that have something in common and see if the others can guess what it is (i.e., they all have white socks or shoes that tie).
- 7 FIND THE LEADER** – One child closes their eyes. The others choose a leader to establish a pattern of clapping, etc. All the children copy the pattern. The one who had their eyes closed and tries to guess who the leader is.

- 8 PICO, FERMI, BAGELS** – Using a chalkboard or large piece of paper taped to the wall, the leader chooses a number between 10 and 99. Have this written someplace where the group won't be able to see it. Have a child start by giving you a random number in that range.

*Pico* = one digit right but in the wrong spot

*Fermi* = one digit right in the right spot

*Bagels* = neither digit is right

Write one of the three next to each number guessed until the correct number is guessed.

- 9 LISTEN FOR THE WORD** – Have the children sit down. Pick three words about the same subject, for example: soccer. The three words could be kick, ball, and coach. Invent a story using those three words. Ask the children to listen for those words and whenever they hear one, they need to jump up.
- 10 COBALT COUNTER** – Have one child close their eyes. Have another child hide the “radioactive object” in the room. Bring in the child and using the cobalt counter (a ruler), they need to find the “radioactive object.” In the meantime, everyone in the room beeps louder and faster as the child gets closer to the “radioactive object.” Switch places once it is found.

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**SEE MORE AT:** <http://naaweb.org/tip-of-the-week/item/89-ten-transition-or-wait-time-games-for-school-age-children#sthash.CFqjpTqt.dpuf>

## OPENING DISCUSSION

What are some favorite transition or wait time games do you use with young people? (Have people demonstrate and join in).

Which of the games in the article seem like games that the young people in your program might be interested in?

Which one should we try to do together today in order to get the hang of it?

What questions or other thoughts do you have about the article?

## APPLICATION ACTIVITY

You are on a field trip to the pool and are waiting with a group of children for the bus to take you back to the program. The bus is late and the children are getting anxious. What would you do?

You are at the park on a field trip and it begins to rain. You move everyone into the shelter house. Some of the children are nervous about the weather. What do you do to pass the time and make everyone comfortable?

You have cleaned up your activities for the day to prepare for the arrival of a guest speaker and presentation. The children are excited. The phone rings and the speaker says they are stuck in traffic and will be 15 minutes late. What do you do?

## CLOSING REFLECTION

What's one game you will use from today's discussion?

# **CERTIFICATE** of PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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**TEN TRANSITION** or **WAIT TIME GAMES** for **SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN**

\_\_\_\_\_ **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT HOURS, EARNED BY:**

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**CONTENT INCLUDED:**

All About Relationships • Making Meaningful Connections • Build a Support Structure for Staff  
Begin with a Greeting • Provide Individual Attention • Hold Youth Accountable  
Scaffold Staff Expectations • Daily Check-ins • Learn Together • Rinse, Repeat and Reflect

**FACILITATOR:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

| List three different ways you can use transition or wait time games with the young people in your program?

- a.
- b.
- c.

| How can you develop your own transition or wait time games?

| How will you 'file' your transition or wait time games so that you incorporate a variety of games and know exactly what you are going to do when an unexpected transition or waiting time occurs?