



Juggle Spending Activity

Materials

2 different colored balls or beanbags

Printed number cards numbered 4 -12 (taped to players shirts or hung around their necks with string/yarn)

2 pieces of paper

Pen or Pencil

Participants

2 Record Keepers

4-12 Players

Objective

This activity is intended to show students how important it is to keep track of one's spending. Students will make the observation that it is easy to remember a few transactions. However, it becomes more difficult to remember every detail as transactions become more numerous

OK Personal Finance Standards

Standard 4.1 - Managing a Bank Account: Explain the reasons for balancing a checkbook and reconciling an account statement.

Game Instructions

Select 2 participants to serve as record keepers. The remaining participants will "play" the game. Give each player a number placard to place on their shirt or around their neck. The players will sit or stand in a circle in numerical order.

Explain to the players that when they are given the signal to begin, they are to pass/toss the ball to other players in the circle. They may NOT pass the ball to the players on their right or left. They must pass across the circle.

Explain to the record keepers that they are to keep precise record of each player that receives the ball and what order the passes occur.

Explain that the ball represents our money. This could be in the form of cash, or a check or debit card, or even a credit card. Each of the numbered players represent a transaction or a location that we spend our money.

Once all participants are in their places, make sure your record keepers are ready and have a good view. Give the players the signal to begin. Allow the players to continue long enough for 15-20 passes to occur. Give the signal to stop.

Select one of the students, and ask them to tell you what order the ball was passed. Most likely, they will be able to identify the first few passes and perhaps the last few. Discourage other players from helping, as you don't want the entire group to piece together the order of the "transactions." This is a good opportunity to explain that we are responsible to track our own spending. We can't depend on our parents or others to be responsible for our spending. You may consider asking another student or two. Remind the students that it was relatively easy for us to remember the first 2-3 passes or "transactions," but as the passes became more numerous, it became more difficult to remember where and what order the ball was passed, or in other words, where and how much money was spent.

When the players fail to precisely recall the order of the "transactions" or ball passes, ask one of the record keepers to recall the proper order.

Let the players know that you're going to play a second round, but there is going to be a slight change. Introduce a second "spender" to the game. They will now be passing two balls across the circle. Explain that this is very common in marriages and families. Spouses often share checking accounts or share a credit account. Or a parent and a child. The same concepts apply when two or more people are spending cash from the same budget.

Let your record keepers know that they will now each be tracking a separate ball or "spender." Assign each record keeper to a specific ball.

Make sure that the record keepers and players are in their places. Explain that the rules of the game remain the same. Give the signal to begin. After sufficient time for numerous transactions to take place, give the signal to stop.

Ask one of the players to recall the order of the "transactions" of one of the balls or "spenders." Have another student do the same for the other. When the students are unable to accurately repeat the sequence, have your record keepers reveal the true order. Ask the players what they may have learned during the experience. Was the second round any different than the first? You might recap that it's easy to remember a couple of the transactions. It's even more difficult to remember transactions that your spouse or family member made.

Conclusion: Explain that when you make recording your spending a priority, you are able to have accurate record of your spending. It helps you to know how much money you have remaining. It helps you avoid overdrafts and other fees and expenses. It helps you stick to your budget. It's better to tell your money where to go, rather than wonder where it went.