

special!

Stir-crazy!

by Kelly Banks

March brings with it the slightest glimpse of a promise of the warm months ahead. After days, weeks and months of early darkness, cold, and uninviting winds, is it any wonder that we haven't all gone stir-crazy with cabin fever? That loosening grip of winter can be felt in the absence of the bitterness in the

wind, the sound of icicles melting from the rooftop, and the sudden emergence of that snow shovel you lost back in January! It's enough to make any group of kids start crawling the walls with months of pent-up energy. Here are some high-energy games to help combat those anxious "when will winter end" jitters!

Dog Catcher (Beavers)

Time: 20 minutes

Equipment: sets of four different coloured pinnies, or four different coloured markers (i.e., coloured paper or cloth), pylons.

Warm-up: Animal movements

- ☞ A leader calls out an animal's name and demonstrates how that animal moves.
- ☞ Beavers move around the activity area imitating that animal and the way it moves (i.e., horse gallop, bunny hop)
- ☞ Emphasize picking animals that move vigorously.

How to play:

1. Divide the Beavers into four teams, assign one of four colours to each team, and give each Beaver a marker to identify his or her team (i.e. Red Dogs, Blue Dogs).
2. Assign each team a designated area marked by a pylon, to be that team's "dog pound".

3. On cue, have the Beavers move around the area while pretending to be dogs (i.e. barking).

4. Call out one of the colours (i.e. Yellow Dogs!). The team identified becomes the dogcatchers and tries to tag as many dogs as possible.

5. When a dog is tagged, they return to their "dog pound" and perform a pre-established physical activity (i.e. jumping jacks, marching) until a new colour is called. When a new colour is called, all the dogs in the pound are freed.

Cat and Mouse (Beavers)

Time: 20 minutes

Warm-up: Use the same warm-up as the above game.



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Photograph courtesy of the 4th Courteney Cub Pack

How to play:

1. Everyone pairs off, elbows linked, in a big circle, with enough room for a Beaver to pass between the pairs.
2. Designate one Beaver as the "mouse" who is running from another Beaver designated as the "cat".
3. The object of the game is for the cat to catch the mouse. The mouse is allowed to cut through the circle, while the cat must stay outside of it. The mouse can hook onto any pair in the circle to be "safe" from the cat, but this means the Beaver on the opposite side of the pair becomes the new mouse, and must now scurry from the cat.
4. When a mouse is tagged it becomes the cat, and the cat joins an existing pair of mice.

The Dizzy Game (Beavers and Cubs)

Time: 20 minutes

Warm-up: Lead a simple five-minute stretching routine.

How to play:

1. Divide the youth into teams of equal number and line up single file. For older youth, teams can compete against each other.
2. At the word "GO!", the first youth in each team runs to a designated spot on the ground about 20 paces away, puts their index finger on the spot (and keeps it there), spins around 10 times as fast as they can, then runs back to their team and touches the next person in line's hand, who then repeats the same actions. This is a lot harder than it sounds!
3. First team finished is the winner.

Scissor, Paper, Rock (Cubs)

Time: 10 minutes

How to play:

1. This game is an active variation on the Scissor — Paper — Rock hand game. It is played the same way, but instead of using hands, the youth use their legs to indicate scissor, paper or rock.
2. Pair everyone up with a partner. Use the following actions:

Scissor

— Cub stands with feet crossed.

Paper

— Cub stands with feet wide apart.

Rock

— Cub stands with feet together.

Scissor beats paper; paper beats rock; and rock beats scissor.

Scissor, Paper, Rock

Youth use their legs in this version of the game.



☞ Have them gradually increase their speed every 30 seconds. Ask them to imagine they are walking in deep sand, walking home from school, or running a race.

How to play:

1. Give each youth a playing card. While the music is playing, youth move around using different locomotive (i.e. run, skip) patterns and exchange playing cards.
2. Stop music every 30-45 seconds and call out a "Suit" or "Number". When music stops, youth are to get into groups based on card numbers or suits (whichever the leader calls) (i.e. all 4s or all spades group together).
3. Each group then does the activity that corresponds to the suit on the card (see below) or a predetermined activity the same number of times on the card (i.e. 3 times for a 3, 11 for jack, 12 for queen, 13 for king and 14 for ace.)

Activities for Suits:

- Hearts — Jumping jacks
- Diamonds — Star jumps
- Spades — Tuck jumps
- Clubs — Knee lifts

Bonus Game! 52 Card Pick-up!

1. Scatter all the cards face down in the middle of the activity area.
2. Youth jog around the outside of the activity area three times. When they have completed three laps, they randomly choose a card from the center. Then they do three more laps, choose another card, etc. Once they have collected enough cards to total 30 points (ace=14), the youth moves to a designated area and does an activity (i.e. jumping jacks, etc.). When another youth joins them, they choose a new activity to do, etc. Continue until all youth are in the designated area.

With all games, it is important to remind youth to be cautious when moving and to be aware of the personal space of others. Warm-up is important, and inform youth not to strain themselves too hard, if they are feeling tired or short of breath. Make sure that lots of water is available for everyone to stay hydrated. These activities will help you sleep like a hibernating bear that night! ^
— Thanks to Kelly Banks for compiling these great games to fend off cabin fever. Kelly keeps busy at the National Office while she waits for winter to end.

Hold'em! (Beavers and Cubs)

Time: 20 minutes

Equipment: audio equipment, and two or more decks of cards.

Warm-up:

☞ Youth start by walking on the spot with a variety of steps (i.e. narrow, wide), pumping their arms back and forth.