

Defense Mechanisms

16. Tall Against Small

Spatial Requirements: Gym/outdoor space required

Activity Type: Movement/group

Grades: 2-12

Group Size: 6 or more

Time: 20 minutes

Introduction: This game is a good lesson in how things can at times be unfair, unbalanced or mismatched. It is good for discussion about what is unfair and how we should handle unfair situations in a positive way. It will help students to practice using anger control in a situation that is clearly unfair and frustrating.

Materials:

- A basketball, volleyball or beach ball

Activity:

Have the class line up tallest to shortest. Then divide the class in half so that one group consists of all the tallest students (Team 1) and the other consists of all the shortest students (Team 2). Set up a game for the two teams where height is an advantage, such as volleyball, basketball, or keep-away with a beach ball. The idea is that after playing for a while, the tall team will be winning and the short team will be frustrated. Then change the rules and tell the tall team that they must now play with one hand in their pocket (or tied behind their back). Play for a while longer with this rule change so the tall team becomes frustrated.

Processing the Experience:

- How did you feel when the game was in your favor?
- How did you feel when it was not in your favor?
- Do you ever feel like life is unfair? When?
- How do people generally react to unfair situations in life?
- How do you react when you think something is unfair? Do you think your reaction is positive or negative?
- Is anger a good defense mechanism? Why or why not?
- What are some positive ways you can handle an unfair situation?
- What are some positive ways you can release your anger when you feel that something isn't fair?