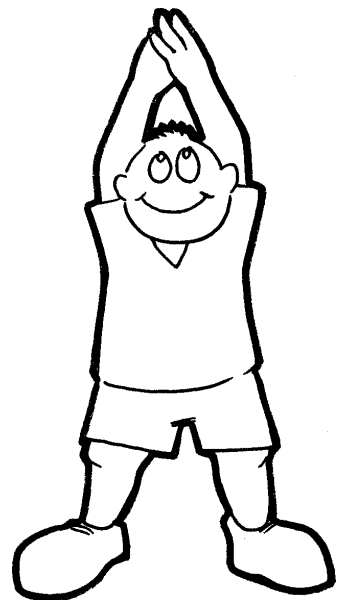


Cultural Awareness

- General Guidelines
- Aboriginal Awareness
- Aboriginal Games
- Games of the World



CULTURAL AWARENESS

Sport offers many opportunities to address prejudice, discrimination, harassment and racism. Sport leaders such as coaches and administrators can take a pro-active approach to ensure an environment where healthy attitudes towards other's cultures can develop and thrive.

To access resources, information and advice on multicultural education contact:

Saskatchewan Association for Multicultural Education (SAME)
2454 Atkinson Street, Regina, SK S4N 3X5
Phone: (306) 780-9428
Email: same@sk.sympatico.ca

RECOGNIZE THE CHALLENGES

adapted from *Early Childhood Education for a Multicultural Society*. (1985)

Barna (1976) has identified factors that may act as stumbling blocks to successful cross-cultural communication.

1. Language – “children will acquire the linguistic characteristics of those with whom they live in close contact” (Chud, Fahlman, 1985)
 - Sentence structure or emphasis on words in a sentence can change the meaning.
 - Tone, speed of speech, pacing and word meaning may be used in different ways.
 - How feelings of emotion are expressed vary from culture to culture – some are open and spontaneous – for some restraint is a sign of maturity and politeness.
 - Expectations of “politeness” may differ – Example: the verbal expectations “please” and “thank you” may be confusing to children from different cultures where polite behaviour is expected requiring no verbal acknowledgement.
2. Non-verbal signs and symbols
 - Acceptable spatial distances during conversations vary in different cultures – some prefer small distances, while some feel comfortable about an arm's length away.
 - Degree of eye contact during conversations is also culturally conditioned – for some, lack of eye contact causes suspicion; while for others direct eye contact is seen as aggressive, disrespectful, defiant, disobedient or impolite.
 - Hand signals vary from culture to culture – gestures which are used to signal approval in one culture may be seen as obscene in another.
 - In some cultures touching is an important aspect of communication, while in others public physical contact is unacceptable.
 - Concept of time varies from culture to culture.



3. Preconceptions and stereotypes
 - People have a tendency to perceive things in a constant way unless they make a conscious effort to view it differently. This results in stereotyping individuals within a group often blocking communication. It must be remembered that differences *within* cultural groups also exist.
4. Tendency to evaluate too quickly
 - Assumptions and judgements made quickly when working with other cultures often leads to miscommunication.
5. Anxiety
 - Differences in communication, expectations and values may cause anxiety in all parties involved.

Nobody can be expected to be an expert in everyone else's culture. Sensitivity, listening, awareness, asking questions, patience, non-judgemental attitudes and tolerance will address the challenges.

Following are some suggestions for providing a healthy environment.

TAKE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Adapted from *Eliminating Racism from Sport and Recreation* (1995)

- Be sensitive and respectful of individual differences.
- Be open and encourage active participation by all who want to participate.
- Act in the best interest of the participant's development as a whole person.
- Avoid pre-judging a participant's abilities and interests.
- Represent all people on your team with care.
- Encourage leaders to speak up about equity.
- Become familiar with sport equity issues and share your learning.
- Examine your organization's values and behaviours.
- Take advantage of cross-cultural training opportunities.
- Respect, value and celebrate differences.
- Become familiar with potential barriers or challenges for particular cultural groups.
- Deal with racial slurs immediately. Ignoring them is a silent endorsement of what is being said. Very young children may just be repeating something they have heard. Do not assume they are motivated by prejudice. Discuss and explain why it is unacceptable.

PROVIDE CULTURAL AWARENESS OPPORTUNITIES

- Take advantage of “teachable moments” to educate children in similarities and differences. People are “different” – that doesn’t mean inferior or superior. It is all right to be different. Displaying attitudes that give the message that you “don’t see race” invalidates the person. A better attitude is “we see it – it is different – that’s O.K.”
- Include cultural games or activities in your program. Resources are available at Saskatchewan Association for Multicultural Education (SAME)
- If your team or association comprises various cultures, invite them to share culture activities where possible.
- Include cross-cultural activities in “off field” activities surrounding a sport event. Example: jamboree, achievement day, orientations or end of year celebrations.
- Seek exhibition games or events with another culture and include interactive pre or post game activities.

GAMES OF THE WORLD

Following examples adapted from *Multicultural Education Resource Book. (1989)* Lopes, Taveras

CATCH THE DRAGON'S TAIL (China)

Formation is single file with each player's hands on shoulders of player in front. First player is the head of the dragon and the last player the tail. The objective is for the head to tag the tail without breaking the line. If line breaks the head becomes the new tail and the next player in line is the new head. Each time the tail is tagged without breaking the line the head gets a point.

PRISON BALL (Italy)

Playing area is divided into two halves, with a narrow neutral zone in between. Players on each team scatter in their half of play area. A player from team one throws the ball into the opposition zone. If the ball is caught before it touches the ground, the thrower becomes a prisoner and goes into the opposite zone, where he/she tries to catch a ball thrown back by team members in order to be freed. If it is intercepted the thrower becomes a prisoner. The objective is to see what team can get the most prisoners. If the ball is thrown out of bounds the throw is repeated. Three consecutive out-of-bounds throws imprisons the thrower.

GO-TAG (India/Pakistan)

Players squat in a line, alternating facing in opposite directions. The player at the end of the line runs around the entire line in either direction. The player at the other end is "It", chasing the runner, and may start in either clockwise or counter-clockwise, but must not change directions once started. "It" can tap the back of any player in the line at anytime who then becomes the new "It". Former "It" takes his or her place in the line. Co-operation and quick thinking is required to make tags that will change direction and catch the runner off guard. When the runner is caught, the game starts again with new end players.

CHICKEN FIGHT (Brazil)

Players have a flag, tie or handkerchief tucked in a waistband. Players are partners in designated play area. Players hop on one right foot with right hand touching left shoulder. Partners try to grab the flag from each other with left hand, without removing hand from shoulder, and without left foot touching down. Points given for each flag obtained.

Following examples from *Games of the World Physical Education Unit – Rhonda Rosenberg (1992)*

BOLA (Argentina)

In Argentina "bolas" are used by gauchos to lasso cattle. To make a bola, stuff a rubber ball into a long sock or pantyhose leg then tie a string or rope approximately 15 ft. long to the end. Play is started with one player lying on their back swinging the bola around at ankle height, gradually letting out the length of rope. When it is out 10-12 feet, everyone begins jumping over it as it comes around. Speed or height of bola can be increased.



BOUND BALL (Cuba)

Playground or volleyball required. Boundaries similar to a volleyball court – line down centre separating the two halves, but without the net. Numbers on each team could be 5-10 (officially the number is 5-2 on front line, one in centre, two at back). Play is similar to volleyball, except the ball is played on the ground with a bounce required between each hit of the hand. On the serve the ball must be bounced before being hit across. 3 players hit the ball before it is hit across to opposition side, but each player may hit it only once and only after it has bounced. Rotation of players is like that in volleyball.

EGYPTIAN STICK GAME (Egypt)

One stick, approximately 4-5 feet in length, for each participant (old hockey sticks or broom handles). Participants are spaced 7-10 feet apart. Players stand directly behind their stick holding it, in upright position, with end on the floor or ground. On “go” players let go of their stick and try to catch another person’s stick before it falls. The original game eliminates players if they fail to get a stick before it lands. A more acceptable modification for children would be to award points each time a stick is caught.

TIGER’S BALL (Israel)

Players are divided evenly into two large circles, with each circle having one ball. Each group sends a player to the centre of the other group’s circle. The centre player tries to intercept the ball as it is being passed across the circle in various directions. When the ball is intercepted, that player earns a point for their team. After each interception, players return to their group and are replaced by new centre players. Set a time limit for interceptions to occur – then replace regardless of whether the ball was intercepted. The team with the most points at the end of the game is declared winner. To make it more active and exciting, add more balls and centre players.

PELOTA EN EL AIRE (Ball in the Air)(Argentina)

Two equal teams. One team forms a large circle with a ball. The other team starts about 20 feet away. On “go” the team with the ball counts the number of overhead passes they make around the circle, while the other team races forward and runs around the outer edge of the circle and back home. The objective is for the first team to pass the ball around the entire circle before the other team all return home. When the team gets back home they call “stop”. Reverse roles. The team with the greatest number of passes is declared the winner.

SNAKES AND SERPENTS (France)

Ten handkerchiefs twisted and tied in knots represent snakes and serpents. They are placed in a row approximately a foot apart. Players take turns hopping over the “serpents”. When they get to the end, they try to pick up the last handkerchief with their teeth, while standing on one foot and using only one hand for balance. The player then hops back through the “serpents”. If successful, the action is repeated to get the next one. Each time the player is successful, they return for another one. The player able to bring back the most handkerchiefs without falling, touching foot, or other hand to ground is declared the winner.



FIRST NATIONS/ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

Adapted from *Sport for All – Opening Doors to Everyone*. (1993) Sask Sport Inc.

First Nations people are those who are Treaty or status Indians, while Aboriginal people are individuals who may be Metis, non-status Indians or of mixed blood origin.

Potential Barriers Preventing Full Participation

- Cost. Many don't have money for fees, equipment or transportation.
- Fewer opportunities to develop skills.
- Previous experiences with racism may leave adults hesitant to join organized sport groups.
- Few First Nations/Aboriginal role models in mainstream sport.
- Lack of experience at simply having fun and enjoying play.
- Lack of parental support and encouragement.
- Lack of understanding of existing sport delivery systems.

Suggestions for Eliminating Barriers

- When looking for assistance, ensure they are well represented at the decision-making table. Encourage them to be part of the system.
- Recruit and train First Nations/Aboriginal volunteers.
- Honour First Nations/Aboriginal culture. Respect the wisdom of elders and other authority figures and respect traditional spiritual beliefs and traditions.
- Tailor your sport to their special needs.
- Offer extra help and encouragement to build participants' self-esteem.
- Go the extra mile when including First Nations/Aboriginal children.
- Use parent aides if necessary to assist in transportation and coaching.
- Seek local role models.
- Provide cross-cultural training for staff, coaches and officials.
- Remember oral not written communication is a strong Aboriginal tradition.

Eliminating Barriers on Reserves and Northern Saskatchewan

- Contact local chief and other respected leaders before launching any programs.
- Copy correspondence to chief and band council member responsible for sport.
- Seek ideas and feedback from community members. They know what works best but may be reluctant to give advice without being asked.
- Be willing to be flexible.
- Don't criticize programs already in place.
- Invest time and effort in building a relationship based on trust.
- Use the Aboriginal Radio Network of the Mississippi Broadcasting Co. to distribute free public service announcements. As well, First Nations/Aboriginal newspapers such as *Saskatchewan Indian and New Breed* are respected publications.

Following are some traditional Indian Games adapted from *Handbook of American Indian Games*.
(1985) McFarlan

KICK BALL RACE

Traditional races were cross-country events of 10-20 miles where individuals or teams of 2-20 kicked and dribbled the ball to the finish line. A modern adaptation could be to race by kicking the ball around a circuit a pre-determined number of times.

FROG RACE

Young competitors, squatting with hands clasped around legs just above ankles, start on a marked line and hop to a finish line. Any player who loosens their hands is ruled out of the game. They can continue if they fall over as long as they do not release the hold on their leg.

MOOSE STALK

Traditionally, this game was played to develop silent movement and keen ears. One partner, blindfolded (the stalker), stands 5-10 feet away from other partner (the moose). The objective is for the stalker to maintain the distance between him/her and the moose for a specified period of time (2-3 minutes) as the moose tries to evade with quiet walking movements, stops/starts, zig-zags. If the moose can't shake the stalker, it can be made more challenging by allowing it to be done in a slow jog.

CAPTIVE OF WAR

Two teams of equal size facing each other about six feet apart. On "go" the objective was for players on either side to touch the hand of an opposing player and dodge back to the safety zone behind their start line. Any player caught prior to reaching the safety zone became a captive behind the opposing team's line. Traditional games had that player unable to escape or be released and some games went on for hours. Modern adaptations to increase activity for captives would allow a release mechanism of some kind or set brief time lines for captives on each team, so captives were inactive for brief periods of time.

BOWL TOSS

Partners sit opposite one another about four feet apart each with a large lightweight bowl (salad bowl or basket) in their hands. One bowl contains a number of small, light objects (table tennis balls, disks made from heavy cardboard). The player with the objects uses the bowl to throw the objects into the air across to the partner. That player, without moving from sitting position, tries to catch as many of the objects as possible in his/her bowl. Another element can be added for players who can add by putting numbers on the objects and totalling the numbers of objects caught.

HANDICAP BALL TOSS

Use an inflated ball for each participant. Objective is to get the ball to the finish line before other players using the following tosses and racing to pick up the ball between tosses:

First toss – One hand holds ball in front of opened legs, while the other hand holds it behind the legs.

Second toss – throw from behind legs but only use right hand.

Third toss – throw from behind legs but only use left hand.



PINECONE HOOP TOSS

Pinecones were traditionally used for all types of play activities. The pinecone hoop toss game tests accuracy and distance throwing abilities. A 12-18 inch hoop is placed a suitable distance (depending on age) from the throwing line. Each player is given three pinecones, which they try to toss into the hoop. One point is given for cones landing inside hoop and bouncing out – 3 points for cones remaining in hoop. The hoop is gradually moved farther away. Challenge children to toss with non-dominant hand. Hoops can be hung and throwers can test their accuracy by throwing overhand.

HIT THE STONE

Traditional contests had young boys throwing heavy stones at a heavy flat stone that was standing on end on the ground, attempting to knock it over from distances of 20-40 feet. The first player to knock it over 10 times, not necessarily consecutively, won. Modern versions could challenge children to knock over targets (pins, wooden blocks, cereal boxes filled with sand) by throwing rubber balls or tennis balls.

OKOTOKS

In the traditional game a large stone was used; modern versions would use a large inflated ball. Players stand with back to and heels touching the start line. They throw the ball backward between their legs to see how far they can throw it before it hits the ground. **Sky Okotoks** - takes place from the same start position, and children see how far they can throw it in the air.

HIT THE TREE

Traditionally the players chose a dead tree and threw stones at it from distances of 20-40 feet. The player who hit the tree the most times out of 10 was the winner. Modern players could use a rubber or tennis ball to throw at a tree in the playground. It can be made even more challenging by marking a target using chalk on the tree.

FOOT CAST BALL

Instead of a stone as was the original game, a beanbag, soccer, volleyball or basketball could be used. The player balances the object on the foot just behind the toes and sends it as far as possible, propelling it forward with thrust of the foot. The objective is to see who can send it the farthest.

TURTLE CATCHER

A circle 30-40 feet in diameter is marked on the ground. Five players (four turtles and one keeper) are inside the circle. On “go” the turtle keeper tries to tag all four turtles. Any turtle that drops to the ground, turns on their back raising arms and legs in the air is safe. They may remain there only to a slow count of six.

HOP, JUMP

From behind a start line children race each other to a finish line using the following action. Hop on one foot followed by jumping (taking off and landing on two feet). Children proceed in this hop-jump manner until they reach the finish line.

BIG JUMP

This game helps develop balance and jumping ability. Players stand on a line or in a circle. When the leader calls jump one – they spring into the air and do a quarter turn before landing. On jump two, another quarter turn is done and so on until they are back to start point. The second time around on jump three, they turn half turn so it only takes two jumps to return to start. When leader calls big jump, they do a full turn and land as they started. Feet have to remain together during the entire jump and the arms are used.

BALL IN THE AIR

Women of many tribes played this game. Balls, attached to a 24-inch thong, were kept in the air by kicking it with either foot while holding the other end of the thong in one hand. One miss and out was the rigid rule. An adaptation would be to let all the children see how many consecutive times they can keep it up. Balloons or an inflated ball with a string attached to, can also be used.

TROPHY SNATCH

This is a challenge game with six players in a circle measuring 40-50 feet in diameter. Each player wears a band of coloured band of crepe paper or other breakaway substance with two ends about two inches long hanging down. When “attack” is shouted by the leader, each partner attempts to snatch the other’s armband. Challengers must not catch, tackle, hold or push in their attempt to snatch the ends. A variation would be to put different coloured bands on and play as teams.

