

9) Spreading Infectious Disease

Catch!

Time Needed

1 session

Before You Start

Make up number tags for each player. Each number tag should have a different number starting with number 1. Clip-on meeting tags can be used or make tags from file cards and string to be worn around necks. Place corresponding numbered slips of paper in a jar or box.

You Need This Stuff

- Number tags for each player
- Tag logs for each player (see master)
- Pens or pencils
- Container with small slips of paper, each with the same numbers as the number tags

What It's About

Help your students understand how infectious diseases pass from person to person. In a simple game of tag, all players walk around and tag two persons on the shoulders. Each player keeps track of who tags whom. After three rounds, the players find out that one of them was sick with the Creeping Crud. How many are now sick? How many people did the disease pass to?

During cold and flu season, germs spread from person to person. How does it happen? How can it be prevented?

Coughing or sneezing into hands and then touching others is an easy recipe for passing on infections. Getting kids to wash their hands frequently or use disinfectant products is a challenge. So is the challenge of getting them to cough or sneeze into their elbows instead of their hands.

In this activity, one player is infected with the Creeping Crud. No symptoms have appeared yet and the player is unaware of having the infection. During the game, all players make deliberate contact with two other players by tagging them on their shoulders. In doing so, the infected player passes on the infection to two other players and to other players that tag him or her. All players use a log to keep track of who they touched and who touched them. Eventually, the infection is passed on to most or all of the players.

What's the Question?

How are infectious diseases passed from person to person?

What to Do

1. Have players sit on chairs arranged in a wide circle. Pass out number tags and tag logs to each player. Make sure each player has a pencil or pen for recording tags.
2. Explain that during each of the three rounds, players will get up, walk over to another player, and lightly tag that player on the shoulder. Have each player then sit down and write the number of the player they tagged on their logs for the first round. Also have them write down the number of any player who tagged them.
3. Announce "Begin."

Wash hands frequently with soap and water, especially after going to the bathroom
Use disinfectant wipes or gel
Don't share food or beverages from the same plates or bottles
Wear a face mask

- Play the game again but this time draw two additional numbers. Tell these players that they practice good infection control (wash hands, etc.) and have prevented themselves from catching the CREEPING CRUD. How does this affect the results at the end of round 3 when two players are protected?

Extras

- How would your life change if you had to wear a face mask? Obtain masks for each student and have them try them out for a few minutes.
- Give each student a small package of disinfectant wipes to take home.
- Have students create posters reminding people to use safe infection control practices and hang the posters near rest rooms at the school.

CATCH!

Your Number

ROUND 1

Who did you tag?
Who tagged you?

ROUND 2

Who did you tag?
Who tagged you?

ROUND 3

Who did you tag?
Who tagged you?

CATCH!

Your Number

ROUND 1

Who did you tag?
Who tagged you?

ROUND 2

Who did you tag?
Who tagged you?

ROUND 3

Who did you tag?
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CATCH!

Your Number

ROUND 1

Who did you tag?
Who tagged you?

ROUND 2

Who did you tag?
Who tagged you?

ROUND 3

Who did you tag?
Who tagged you?