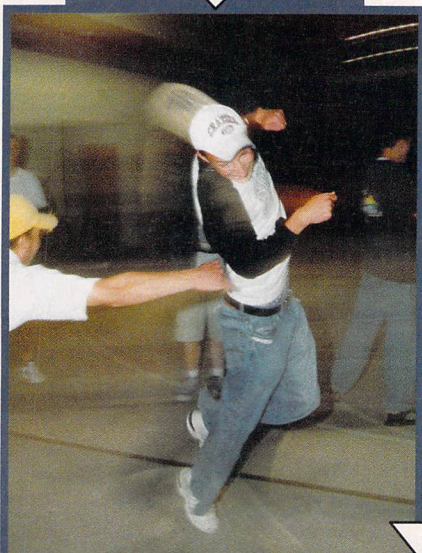


BEST-EVER Summ

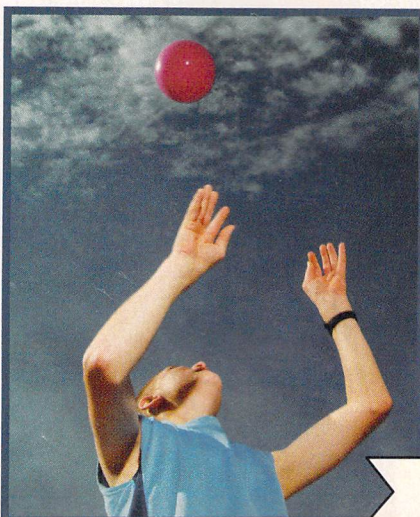


ALL ACROSS

SUPPLIES: none

"It" stands between two goal lines or tape marks about 30 feet apart and calls "All across!" All the players cross from one line to the other, and It tags them as they run across—tagged players now join It as taggers. Now the remaining players are on the other side of the field and must run back to their original side, passing It and those who have been tagged by It. The game continues until everybody has been tagged and is in the middle of the field or area. All who are caught assist until everyone is in the middle together.

HERE'S A TWIST: Have only guys or only girls stand in a row on a line. The "capture" (instead of tagging) is made by lifting the person off the ground until "1-2-3" is counted. Or play Gorilla and the Trees, where It is the Gorilla and can move all around the field. Those tagged become Trees and can only move one step in any direction, using their arms like branches to tag those who run back and forth.

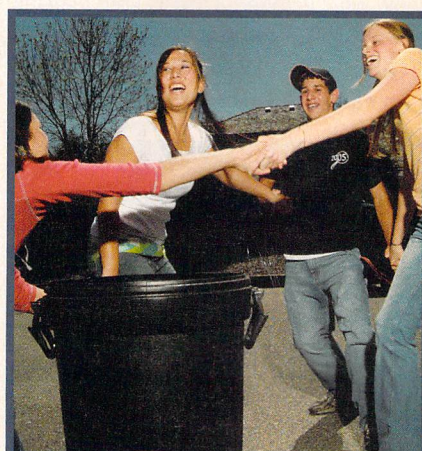


ALL RUN

SUPPLIES: rubber ball (or any kind that's soft)

"It" stands with the ball, and the other players gather close. It tosses the ball high into the air and the other players flee in any direction. It catches the ball and tosses it at the runners. A runner hit by the ball trades places with It. If the ball doesn't make contact with anyone, It tosses the ball up again.

HERE'S A TWIST: It catches the ball and calls "Halt." The runners must then stand still. The players must not move their feet at any time, but they can move their bodies. Or form a circle and have teenagers number off. One person stands in the center of the circle, throws the ball into the air, and calls out a number. Whoever has that number runs for the ball as everyone else tries to run as far away as they can. The person running for the ball reaches it, yells out "Halt," and everyone else stops running. The person who has the ball then takes three steps toward anyone and tosses the ball at him or her.



CAN-CAN BUMP

SUPPLIES: clean, plastic garbage can

This game is seriously tiring, but it's one of my favorites. Form a circle of five to 25 students. This is not a co-ed game and is best played with guys or girls only. Have students hold hands around a clean, plastic garbage can. They should begin pulling and tugging, but not letting go. They're trying to get someone else to bump into the can. If a player touches the can in any way, that player is out. If players break their grip on one another, they're both out. Play pauses after each player leaves the circle, giving time for players to rest and regrip their handholds. Play until one person remains. A safety measure for this game would be to put down wrestling mats to make a cushiony surface.

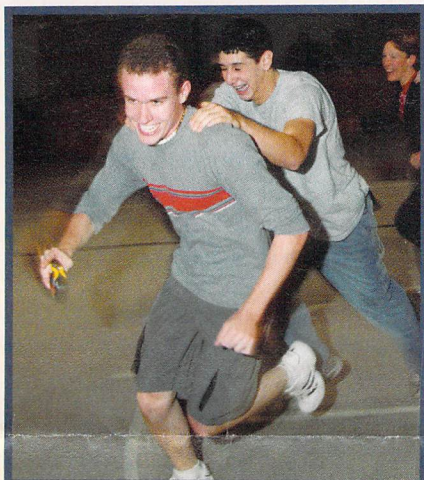
HERE'S A TWIST: Add another trash can to speed up the game. Or, instead of having kids hold hands, ask them to hold connectors such as rolled-up T-shirts or foot-long nylon ropes with knots in each end. You might also have teenagers form equal teams. Alternate the kids in the circle so that no two team members are next to each other.

er Games

10 of the greatest ways to inject fun and friend-building into your summer youth ministry activities

BY LES CHRISTIE

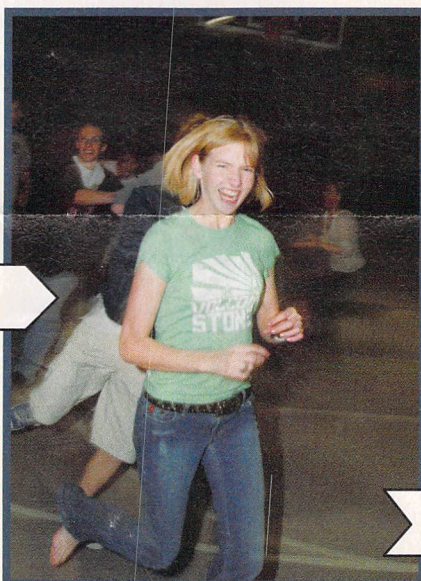
Some of your best memories of summer likely include the games you played. And summer + games = youth ministry. That's because game playing is a crucial tool for building a friendship culture in your group. The fun that game playing produces is crucial—it's the oil that greases relationships in youth ministry. Here are 10 of the best summer games, adapted from game guru Les Christie's new book *Best-Ever Games for Youth Ministry* (Group Publishing, Inc.).



CATCH THE DRAGON'S TAIL

SUPPLIES: handkerchief

Have kids form groups of eight to 10 and have them line up, one behind the other. Everyone should put their arms on the waist or on the shoulders of the person in front of them. The last person in line tucks a handkerchief in the back of his or her pants, with part of the handkerchief hanging out. At the signal, the "head" of the "Dragon" (the front of the line) begins chasing its own "tail" (the end of the line), trying to snatch the handkerchief. The tricky part of this epic struggle is that the people at the front and the people at the end are clearly competing—but the folks in the middle aren't sure which way to go. The game ends when the head finally gets the handkerchief. Then the head stuffs the handkerchief in the back of his or her pants and becomes the new tail, while the second person from the front becomes the new head.

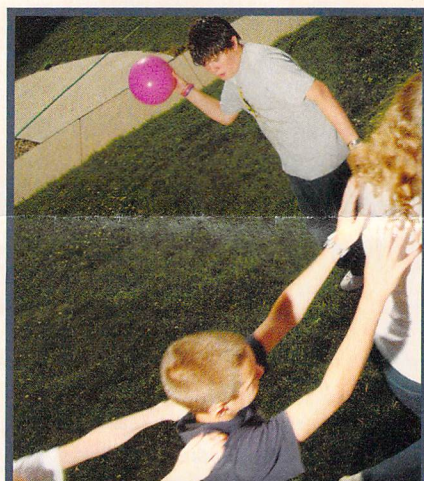


DRAGON AND SPIDER

SUPPLIES: none

The entire group, with the exception of one person, lines up single file, each one lightly holding on with both hands to the waist (or the shoulders) of the person in front. The entire line tries to ensnare the "Spider," who is the lone individual not in the line. To catch the Spider, the head and tail of the line must surround the Spider and enclose that person in the circle.

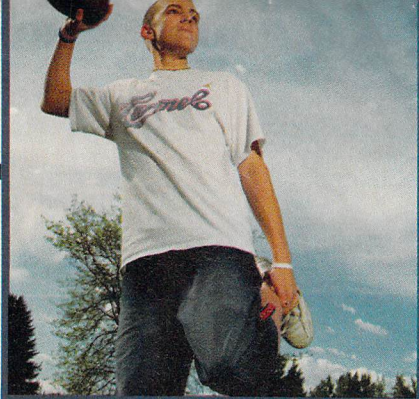
HERE'S A TWIST: Divide the group into teams of eight to 10 and have several Spiders to catch.



DRAGON DODGE BALL

SUPPLIES: rubber ball

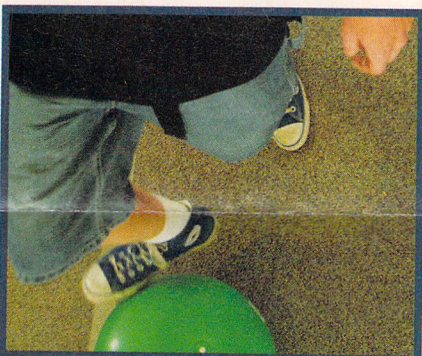
Have the entire group form a circle. Have four or five teenagers form one team. This team goes into the center of the circle and forms a line by placing their hands on the waist of the person in front of them. The people who make up the circle throw the ball at the "Dragon," trying to hit the last person (must be below the waist). Once hit, the last person returns to the outside circle, and players continue to throw the ball at the new person at the end of the Dragon until only one person is left and that person, too, is hit. Then send a new team of four or five into the middle. >>>



FLAMINGO FOOTBALL

SUPPLIES: football

Announce that you're going to play tackle football, boys against the girls. Your boys will get pretty charged up about that. Then announce that the rules are the same as regular tackle football, except the boys must hold one foot off the ground with one hand at all times. They must run, pass, hike, and catch—on one foot.

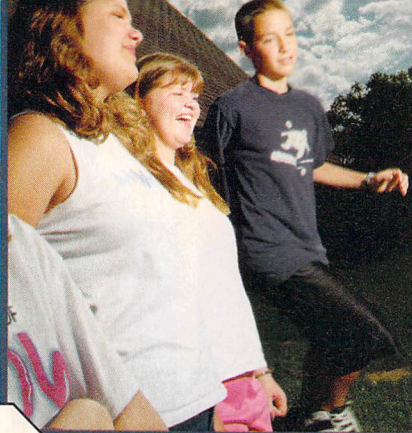


HUMAN FOOSBALL

SUPPLIES: string or cord, chairs, soccer ball

Human Foosball imitates the table game on a larger scale. Divide a playing field into 10 sections using string or cord strung across the field about waist high and attaching it at both ends to folding chairs. Each team should have 10 players placed in the pattern of the table game.

The object is to kick the ball into the other team's goal. The ball may be advanced using any part of the body except the hands and arms. This rule also applies to the goalie. Players may only advance the ball while it's in their sections and may move laterally as much as they like. Have spotters on the edges whose job is to roll the ball back into play once it's been kicked out of bounds.



GO TAG

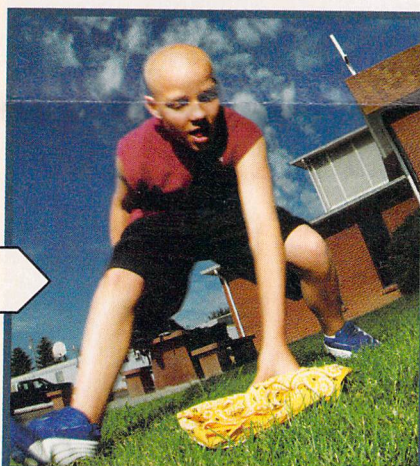
SUPPLIES: none

Everyone kneels in a line, alternate players facing opposite directions. If you think of the line as the central axis, you can imagine an oval track running around the line. (There's no need to mark boundaries; the track is defined by the axis.) The teenager at one end of the line will be the first Runner. This student may run around the track in either direction throughout the

game. The teenager at the other end will be the Chaser. This student may start running either clockwise or counterclockwise but may not switch directions once starting. The object of the game is for the Chaser to tag the Runner.

The Chaser works with the other people kneeling in the line. As the Chaser is chasing around the track, the Chaser can tap the back of any kneeling player and shout, "Go!" The tapped player steps forward to begin the chase, while the old Chaser replaces that player, kneeling in the line. This maneuver makes the Chaser able to cross over the center of the line and change the direction of the chase.

The key to this game is to change Chasers frequently and rapidly enough to catch the Runner off guard. Running speed is not as important as reflexes and quick thinking. When the Runner is tagged, that teenager kneels at one end of the line, the person who tagged him or her becomes the new Runner, and the person at the other end of the line becomes the starting Chaser for the next round.



SNATCH

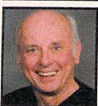
SUPPLIES: masking tape, handkerchief

Have kids form two teams. Mark two lines on the ground about 30 feet apart, and have each team stand behind its line, facing the other. Then have players number off from right to left. In the center of the space between the lines, place a handkerchief on the ground. You can also set something like a rock in the center and place the handkerchief on top of it.

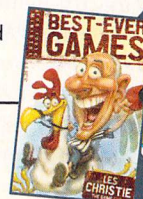
Call a number. The players on each side who have that number run out to the center. The one who gets there first snatches up the handkerchief and dashes back to his or her team's line. The players from the other team try to tag this student. This

player will be safe and score points if he or she reaches the line without being tagged. If the other team tags this player, they get points.

Very often both runners reach the handkerchief at the same instant. When this happens, each one tries to wait until he or she has a good chance to get a head start before snatching the handkerchief. Each runs in, pretends to grab for the handkerchief, and does everything possible to get the other player a little way away from the rock. One thing is important. Don't touch the handkerchief while pretending to grab for it. If touched, even though it's not picked up, the other player can tag that person and score points.



Adapted from *Best-Ever Games for Youth Ministry*
by Les Christie (Group Publishing, Inc.).



END