

Here is an activity that is not only fun but has great discussion potential. It is a combination trust walk and obstacle course. First you will need a large area with a lot of minor obstacles such as light poles, trees, playground equipment, etc. (One group used the church boiler room after they had shut down all of the heating and cooling equipment.) Then pick a starting point and run some heavy cord to the nearest obstacle. At that point string out two or more lines to other nearby obstacles. Only one line will continue beyond one of the obstacles, the others will dead end. Continue the main line to the next obstacle with more dead ends, etc. Mark the end of the line by hanging a coffee can full of marbles from the last obstacle.

Divide into small groups of eight to 12 kids. Have each group choose a leader and two or three assistants. Line the kids up in a hand-on-shoulder single file line and blindfold each one (unless you are in a room and can make it absolutely dark). Lead each group separately by a confusing path to the starting point and let each group follow the course alone.

Explain to the groups that the object is to follow the main line together without separating. (The leader can stop the group and send out assistants to check when they come to more than one line.)

Be sure to vary the heights of the line. For example, if the main line leads to an obstacle at shoulder level, it could go out from the obstacle at knee or ankle level, while a dead end continues from shoulder level. Also plan obstacles that require the kids to stoop under. Make sure the course is long enough so that it takes 20 to 25 minutes to finish!