

GROUP MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES THAT WORK

(But you have to PLAN AND WORK AT IT!)

STRATEGY 1: **WORK AS A TEAM**

When you work as a team with the other Clover Kids Leaders, you send the message to the youth that what you are doing is important to everyone. Working together is more fun and decreases stress. Include parents in your activities – as participants in games and with other activities.

Strategy	Group Management-WHY	When that isn't working right...
All adults participate	Keeps the group involved and active	Invite the other leaders to "play" with you while you are playing.
One adult set up the next activity while the others lead an activity	No waiting & keeps the flow of the meeting going.	Use your fingertip activities to keep the group entertained while the next activity is being set up.
All adults know their roles for the activities.	Divide the activities up so everyone has a role	Group discussion right before the meeting to review group management strategies

STRATEGY 3: **NEVER MAKE THEM WAIT!**

Waiting encourages inappropriate behavior. When groups of youth are un-entertained, they will find ways to entertain themselves.

Waiting often occurs when...	Group Management-How	When that isn't working
Cleaning	Give a 5 minute warning	Have those who finished early play a game
	Have "Messy" children start cleaning first and let everyone know	Make a game out of cleaning – this group vs that group or everyone before you count to 20
	Have a system for getting and putting away supplies	Have everyone who finished early help the rest of the group
	Have something waiting for those who finish early to do	Play a quick game to get control and resume
	Give complete directions...when you have finished this...do this.	Quiet reminders work better than yelling – they will only get louder!
Activity is not ready – you are not prepared	Be prepared!	Fingertip Activities
	Use other leaders to your advantage – plan the activities so you lead every other one - so you set up while they lead	All leaders should watch and help where needed – preferably with the group – but if the next activity isn't ready - set up a quick game
	Use WRITTEN PLANS	Index card of games and songs
	OVER PLAN	Index card of games and songs
	Don't get ready for activities you don't control too early or have an alternate activity waiting...	– play a quiet game while waiting

A few good activities and games up your sleeve will work wonders in most situations!!!

STRATEGY 2: USE WRITTEN PLANS

Written plans helps you stay on task, minimize wait time, and lets others know what is going on. Meetings and activities will flow better when you use written plans and when things do get out of control, you will be better prepared to bring them back where they belong. If you OVERPLAN you will never run out of things to do.

Strategy	Group Management-WHY	When things fall apart
Have a set of games written down to use at a moments notice	Keeps the group involved and active	Use fingertip activities to get them “back with you” and then go on to the next activity.
Everyone who is involved in “running the show” should have the plan	Keeps the group from waiting & keeps the flow of the meeting going.	Stop and do a quick relaxation technique or a quick “quiet” game

STRATEGY 4: USE YOUR VOICE STRATEGICALLY

There are several ways to use your voice strategically so you don’t get stressed and have to resort to yelling.

Strategy	Group Management-How	When things fall apart
Never talk above their noise	Start loud and immediately quiet down to a whisper	Have a “cue” that gets their attention in fun ways
	Use your cues	“If you can hear me, clap once, If you can hear me clap twice...etc.. (loud whisper)
Give complete and clear directions	Give directions BEFORE you pass distracting things out (water balloons-pretty much everything!)	Call the group away from the area and explain what they will do
	All directions must end with ACTION on the youth’s part	
	Repeat directions over and over until everyone is done	
	Provide written and verbal directions when possible	
Give messages is different ways	Look them in the eye when you are talking to them	
	Written, verbal, picture instructions	
	Use the right tone of voice for the activity-(not crazy for a quiet game)	

STRATEGY 5: BE A GOOD ROLE MODEL

Being a good role model will make you and the youth feel good about working together.

Strategy	Group Management-How	When that doesn’t seem to work...
Be a good role model	All leaders must know their jobs-everyone participates	Keep your cool-the calmer you are the calmer they will be
	Use positive language – both verbal and body	Use humor
	When it is time to clean up – you do it too	Make clean up enjoyable by talking and making it a game
	Listen to all sides – to help the children solve their own issues	Really listen
	Choose your “battles” wisely	Don’t nit-pick!
	Show true team work with everyone – working toward the common goal of fun and learning	Relaxation (time out for the leader)... Get out some markers and paper and let them go while you re-group