



You're Respect-a-Ball!

OVERVIEW

The young people toss around a beach ball while telling one another why they are worthy and deserving of respect and kindness. This activity is a good way to help young teens understand the concept of respect and how respect differs from compliments.

Suggested Time

10 minutes

Group Size

This activity works best with a group of up to fifteen people. If your group is larger than that, use more than one beach ball and recruit adults to help monitor the activity.

Special Considerations

Very young adolescents may be reluctant to elaborate on a concept as nebulous as respect. If you have many participants who are age ten, eleven, or twelve, you may want to use the alternative approach offered near the end of this strategy.

Materials Needed

- ☀ beach balls, preferably without any printing or pictures on them, one for every fifteen people
- ☀ permanent markers, one for every fifteen people

PROCEDURE

1. Ask the young people what the word *respect* means. Chances are they will know the basic meaning of the word. Elicit from them how respecting someone differs from giving them a compliment. Be sure to draw out these ideas: We *compliment* someone because of what they have done or accomplished. We *respect* everyone because of who they are as human beings. All human beings have the right to be respected.

2. Put in the middle of the group one beach ball for every fifteen participants. Invite the young teens to offer several reasons that we respect people. As they offer their reasons, have the young people write them on the beach ball using a permanent marker. Be sure that in the end, the following reasons are represented in some form:

- ⊙ God created everyone.
- ⊙ We are made in the image and likeness of God.
- ⊙ All human beings are entitled to basic dignity and respect.
- ⊙ Respect is the foundation of all human relationships.
- ⊙ Human beings naturally strive for goodness. In those efforts they must be respected and supported.

3. Toss a beach ball to someone, and as you do tell that person why you respect her or him. For example, you might say, "I respect you because I know you care about others" or "I respect you because I see you doing God's work." Invite the young teens to do the same for one another. Make sure everyone gets a ball at some point.

4. Close with a challenge to respect all people at all times—whether or not we like a particular person. Respecting has nothing to do with liking. We owe people respect no matter who they are in our eyes. What counts is who they are in God's eyes.

ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

- ⊙ If you have many people under age thirteen in your group, consider omitting personal expressions of respect in step 3. Instead, suggest that the young people read from the ball a reason to respect others and then toss the ball to someone who has not yet had it, continuing until all the reasons have been read.

NOTES

Use the space below to jot notes and reminders for the next time you use this strategy.

