NITRO CROSSING

a.k.a The Poisonous Peanut Butter Pit Challenge

Group must safely cross a poisonous peanut butter pit to safety, using a rope swing. All must cross (one at a time) The first challenge is to get a hold of the rope!

Ms. Jimenez

Pre Initiative: Establish an environment of trust and cooperation. Consider warm-ups, icebreakers, or get to know you activities first. Name games, Bumpity Bump, Find your other half, and Line-ups are relatively quick and easy. For example: without talking, arrange yourselves alphabetically by middle name, or a Hot Sauce Preference Scale.

Guidelines and Rules: Communicate clearly that each person is asked to be a part of the team. Students uncomfortable or unable to hold the rope can be assigned as “line judges” or another role that contributes to the overall success of the group. Consistently reinforce that comments about anyone’s body will not be tolerated. (i.e. He’s so small, he’ll make it easy, or she’s too big for the rope.)

Framing: Create a story or scenario or metaphor around the activity. The poisonous peanut butter pit or the bog of eternal stench are just examples. Make it your own. You are being chased by a band of wild hyenas and you must get your team of explorers safely across the pit of crocodiles without touching. You (the leader) have magical marshmallow boots, but they do not fit anyone else.

Set-up: Create boundaries on either side of hanging rope. All students on one side must make it to the other side. This is where your role as facilitator is to not give too many instructions. Students will find a way to get the rope to them. If anyone touches the pit, it is a “reset” and they begin again. Assist as necessary to prevent accidental falling or bodies being slammed into.

Processing Questions:

What was the most challenging thing about this task? Easiest? Is that the same for everyone?

On a scale of 1-5, hold up your fingers to show how you worked together.

How did you help each other?

Give several examples of group cooperation that you observed/experienced.

If you were to do this again, what would you do differently?

Any real life examples of how groups must work together to achieve a common goal?

How did it feel to be encouraged?

Variations:

1. You can have X amount of touches before you must reset.
2. Sing ‘row your boat’ or count to five once students are all aboard.
3. Do not have to get the whole team on the platform, just behind the boundary.

4. Place a time limit for successfully completing the PB Pit.

5. Use a stopwatch to see if they can beat their previous times.

6. To increase difficulty, do not allow students to speak to one another. (They all came down with laryngitis at the same time-how weird!)

7. Allow only one person to speak and direct the group.

8. Once everyone is together on the platform, the antidote can be obtained. Everyone must make it safely back without dropping it. The antidote can be a ball, a bucket of water, a rock, etc.