

**Ball Toss Race**

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| **# of people to play:** 4+ | **Best for ages:**  7+ |
| **Equipment needed:** Small ball **Social and Emotional (SEL) Competencies:** Relationship skills  **SEL Skills Practiced:** Teamwork, positive communication | **Setup/Teaching Time:**  2 minutes |

### **Set Up**

* Designate a space for the group and one or more balls that can easily be thrown/caught**—**bean bags, tennis balls, dodgeball or other.

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### **Before You Start**

### Have the group get into a circle and have one or more balls (appropriate size for throwing and catching) ready.

### Go around the circle allowing everyone to say their name so that the others can hear.

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### **Review SEL Skills Practiced:**

* **Teamwork:** Communicate with, trust and support others to reach a goal. Make sure others have a role on the team.
* **Positive communication:** speak to others with kind words that would make them feel good about themselves. Listen to the ideas of others.

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### **How to Play**

* The leader begins by throwing, rolling, or bouncing a ball (depending on the age and skill level) to another player while saying the other person’s name loudly. Explain that it is very important to remember who you have passed the ball to.
* Keep passing the ball around the circle so that everyone has received the ball one time. You can have players sit down or cross their arms once they have received the ball to make sure nobody gets it twice.
* When the last person gets the ball, have them pass it back to the leader.
* Now without the ball and in the same order, have each player say out loud who they will pass the ball to so that the pattern of the ball’s movement is established.
* Once everyone remembers who to pass to, try again with the ball and see how fast they can go.
* After trying a couple times, ask the group:
  + Who has an idea for how to get the ball to everyone more quickly?
  + What do you think about adding a second ball?
  + Shall we time ourselves and then try to beat our time?

**SEL Game Debriefs**

* How did you support your team in this game?
* What can we say to someone on the team to make them feel good about themselves, even when they make a mistake?
* How can we use teamwork or positive communication at home this week?

### **Academic Applications**

* After an order has been determined,
  + Have students spell vocabulary words, one letter per toss
  + Use the game to memorize a poem or number sequence as a group

### **At-Home Accommodations**

* Play the game with balled up socks!

### **Modifications for Social Distancing**

* Stand farther apart.
* Make sure you wash the equipment before and after use and wash your hands.

### **Challenge ideas**

* Add more balls - if you have ones of different shapes and sizes, use them all!
* Have multiple patterns going at once, or try to establish a new pattern and then return to the first pattern - try to see if the group remembers!
* Instead of calling out names, establish a category (ex: animals, states, etc.).