

Oklahoma 4-H Youth Development Program

Building Leaders for Tomorrow

Instilling and developing leadership capabilities in youth and adults.

ACTIVITY 18: "Tossing the Pizza"

AGE LEVEL—Intermediate, Advanced

CONCEPT OR SKILL – (Int.)

Teamwork – Nurturing relationship (club, community, family, school, etc.)

(Adv.) Plan, organize and conduct educational programs and serve as a mentor for younger members.

LIFE SKILL(S) – (Int.) **Heart** –

Cooperation, Accepting Differences, Social Skills, Empathy; **Health** – Managing Feelings

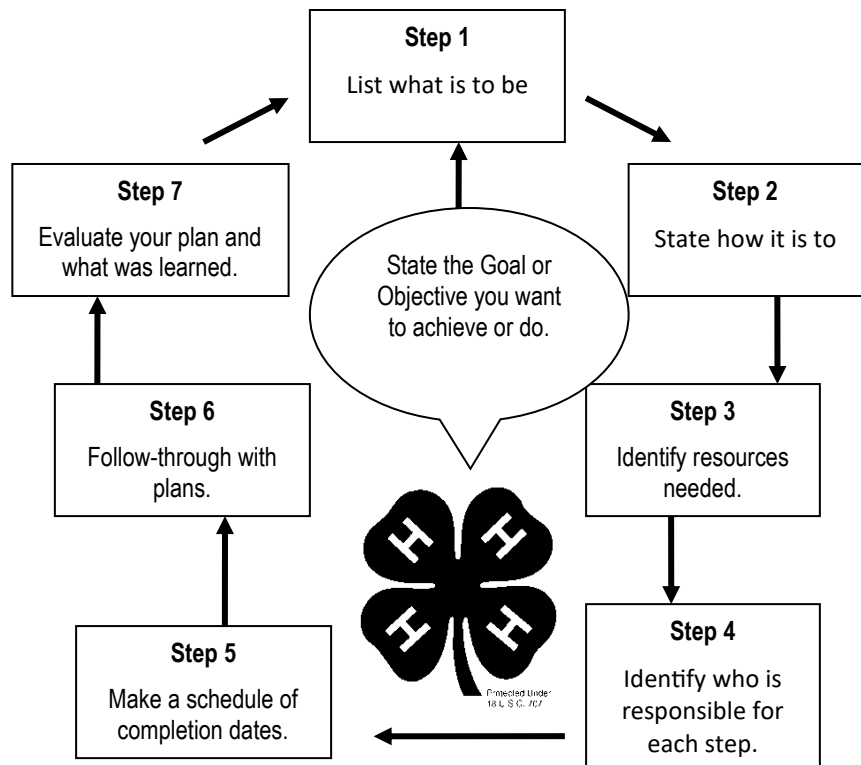
(Adv.) **Heart** – Sharing, Nurturing Relationships, Communications;

Head – Planning/Organizing, Critical Thinking, Keeping Records, Wise Use of Resources, Problem Solving; **Hands** - Volunteering, Marketable Skills

BEHAVIORAL INDICATOR – (Int.) Enjoy working in coeducational groups.

(Adv.) Are developing community consciousness, enjoy sharing their skills and talents.

THINGS TO KNOW:



A fun group challenge is a great way to expose youth to an experience where they have the chance to practice and develop effective problem solving skills. Youth 12-14 years old are beginning to build upon their concepts of critical thinking and problem solving. Their tolerance for difficult questions or challenges is increasing and they are able to exhibit more patience and less frustration when working through problems. Youth 15-19 years old appreciate activities that allow them to practice, challenge and perfect their skills. They will be able to offer aid and advice when working with younger age groups. The volunteer needs to remind the group that there is often more than one solution to a problem.

The solution too many real life challenges are often limited by the methods and materials available or used. It is essential for youth to learn flexibility so that when presented with a challenge they can approach it with the confidence and creativity in order to find the best solution. Youth at the intermediate and especially the advanced levels are beginning to be able to use abstract thinking and theories and are excited when challenges and solutions are not simply "black and white." Youth who learn flexibility will do well academically, emotionally and professionally, for they will be resilient when faced with difficult circumstances.

4-H members should be actively involved in all program planning. Young people have a greater commitment to the program/project if they have been contributing members of the planning team. Volunteers are strongly encouraged to read the **Oklahoma 4-H Volunteer Development Series #856 "Planning"** in preparation for this activity. The following is a brief excerpt from the material.

Planning is a process that involves advanced thought, preparation, and commitment to a project or idea. The planning process includes deciding what is to be done, thinking through how it is to be done, identifying resources needed, identifying who is responsible and providing a schedule of completion times. Placing a plan in writing makes a formalized commitment to that plan.

Planning provides a systematic process for achieving one's goal from beginning to end. In planning, an individual works backwards from their goal by deciding what needs to be done to reach that goal by a designated time in the future.

Planning provides an effective manner for tracking progress, preparing alternatives for possible setbacks and provides a means for evaluating and redirecting time, talents, and resources. People who resist planning because they believe it takes time, involves too much thought and paperwork, is restrictive to their creativity or it makes them too accountable, waste more time and energy simply because of their lack of planning. In the end, planning saves time, energy and resources. A complete set of 4-H Plans will include the following:

1. List what is to be done.
2. How it is to be done.
3. Identifies resources needed.
4. Identifies who is responsible.
5. Provides a schedule of completion times.
6. Follow-through with the plans.



"Tossing the Pizza" requires youth to be apply creative problem solving in a group setting. The primary focus of the activity will depend on the targeted age level. **Intermediate Level** – Focus on developing nurturing relationship (club, community, family, school, etc.) through teamwork. **Advanced level** - Focus on teens on serving as a mentor when planning, organizing and conducting educational programs for younger members.



Materials Needed: Knotted raccoon circle.

Do: This activity definitely fits into the "harder than it looks" category. Begin with a group of 5-8 participants holding onto a knotted raccoon circle, hands upward, elbow straight, with no slack in the circle. The challenge is for the group to toss this raccoon circle pizza into the air, at least to the height of their heads and then for everyone in the group to catch the circle as it drops back down, without anyone moving their feet. After a few unsuccessful attempts, encourage the group to brainstorm ideas, implement their ideas and evaluate the success. The cycle will continue until success is achieved.

A good pizza flipping team can toss their raccoon circle pizza in the air three times without anyone in the group dropping it. For a higher level challenge, the ultimate pizza chefs can spin their pizza dough in the air. This means tossing the pizza into the air and having the knot come back down at least one person to the right or left of where it was when it was launched. A little "spin action" can actually improve the team's performance. This simple problem solving activity is a fun way to encourage teamwork and creative problem-solving.

Reflect:

- 1) Did the group jump right into the task or did they discuss their options first?
- 2) What was the success rate of the group in the first few attempts?
- 3) How did processing and planning effect the pizza toss?
- 4) Was everyone's ideas heard and considered or were some dismissed?
- 5) Did the group piggyback or branch out from an unsuccessful option to achieve a solution?
- 6) Name four key factors which made the group successful in tossing the pizza?
- 7) Why do you think the group improved?

Apply:

- 1) What is the key to obtaining a goal or achieving a specified purpose/objective?
- 2) Why would it be important to write down the goal or purpose? Why would it be beneficial to communicate a goal and plans for achieving the goal?
- 3) Who should be involved in the planning process?
- 4) Does brainstorming have a purpose in creative problem solving and the planning process?
- 5) Name ways where success is dependent on goal setting and problem solving. Is it important in project and club work to set specific and attainable goals and have a plan for achieving those goals?

