This activity page must be presented to the activity provider prior to the activity taking place. The activity provider must meet the minimum requirements listed on this page. For more information on planning trips using outside providers, consult Appendix O - Outside Activity Providers.

Equipment

A fully stocked first aid kit must be readily accessible. (Consult Appendix D - Sample First Aid Kit)

A working communication device (e.g., cell phone) must be accessible.

Determine that all equipment is safe for use (e.g., no sharp edges, sharp corners, cracks, or splinters). Students must be encouraged to report equipment problems to the teacher.

Manila Hemp Tug of War rope or equivalent must be used:

- minimum 32mm (1¼ “) in diameter
- minimum 33m (108’) in length

Ropes must be regularly checked for splinters and severe wear.

Stop watch.

Whistle.

Clothing/Footwear/Jewellery

Appropriate clothing and footwear (e.g., flat soled athletic shoes) must be worn. No cleats, spikes or gloves permitted.

No exposed jewellery permitted.

When long hair poses a safety risk it must be secured. Devices (e.g. hair pins, clips and barrettes) used to tie back long hair must not present a safety concern.
Facilities

Determine that all facilities are safe for use. Students must be encouraged to report facility problems to the teacher.

Outdoors grass area minimum 8m x 40m (26’ x 131’).

The pulling area must be a flat, level surface free of debris and water.

The playing area must be outlined with tug of war markings.

Turning points, finish lines, end zones, and boundaries must be a safe distance away from walls, stages, equipment, trees, posts, natural hazards, and holes. Walls, stages, equipment, trees and posts must not be used as turning points, finish lines, end zones or boundaries. A marker (e.g. line or pylon) must be designated and be properly identified.

No indoor facilities can be used for tug of war. The exception is a commercial Tug of War indoor facility.

When running takes place off school site for a warm up:

- Teachers must do a safety check ‘walk through’ in order to identify potential problems prior to initial use of route or course.
- Teachers must outline to the students the route or course (e.g., notice of areas to approach with caution) before the start of the run.
- Teachers must determine that students are not crossing busy intersections unless directly supervised.

Special Rules/Instructions

Be aware of students whose medical condition (e.g., asthma, anaphylaxis, casts, previous concussion, orthopaedic device) may affect participation. (Consult Fundamentals of Safety)

Students must not participate in the activity until they receive information on concussion prevention specific to the activity, inherent risks of the activity (e.g. outline possible risks and ways to minimize the risks), and procedures and rules for safe play. Students must receive instruction on the importance of reporting symptoms related to a suspected concussion.

Refer to the school board’s transportation procedures related to communicating with parents/guardians the location of an off-site activity and the means of transportation used as well as to the need for obtaining parent/guardian permission.

Activities must be modified according to the age, ability level, language, and experience of students and the facility available.

Previous training, fitness level and the length of time and intensity of physical activity must be taken into consideration.
Activities must be based on skills that are taught.

Skills must be taught in proper progression.

A proper warm-up and cool-down must be included.

Maximum number of participants on each team: 8.

Students must be informed to never wrap the rope around waist or wrist or pull it under/through clothing.

No knots or loops are to be made in the rope, nor must it be locked across any part of the body of any team member.

At the start of a pull, the rope must be taut with the centre rope marking over the center line marking on the ground.

Every pulling member must hold the rope with the palms of both bare hands facing up. The rope will pass between the body and the upper part of the arm.

For the end puller/anchor, the rope passes alongside the body, diagonally across the back and over the opposite shoulder from rear to front. The remaining rope passes under the armpit in a backward and outward direction and the slack runs free. The anchor then grips the standing part of the rope by the ordinary grip (i.e., the palms of both hands facing up, with both arms extended forward).

Inform students that there is the potential for rope burns.

To reduce the risk of rope burns:

- grip the rope only hard enough to stop it from slipping
- momentarily wiggle fingers without letting go of the rope
- if arms tire, momentarily squeeze rope under armpit

Participants must be instructed in proper foot positioning and foot work.

Instruction must be given in the likelihood of a fall and recovery techniques.

Maximum time for each pull is one minute.

Allow teams sufficient time to physically recover after each pull (minimum of one to two minutes is required).

Adequate liquid replacement (personal water bottles, water fountains) must be accessible for students before, during and after physical activity to prevent dehydration.

Environmental Considerations

When environmental conditions may pose a risk to student safety (e.g. thunderstorms [lightning] or student(s) with asthma, triggered by air quality), teachers must take into consideration their school board/school’s protocols and procedures related to:
- environmental conditions (consult Appendices F-1 to F-6: Lightning Protocol, Sample Air Quality Index, Sample Temperature, Tornado, Ultra Violet Index, and Wind Velocity Preparedness Guides); and
- insects (e.g., mosquitoes and ticks [consult the school/school board’s protocols and/or regional Public Health Department’s website]).

Students must receive instruction on safety procedures related to environmental conditions and be made aware of ways to protect themselves (e.g. sun burn, heat stroke).

Insect repellent and sun screen must not be applied to palms of hands.

At all times the school board’s weather and insect procedures are the minimum standards. In situations where a higher standard of care is presented (e.g., outside activity providers, facility/program coordinators), the higher standard of care must be followed.

Pulling must be cancelled in adverse conditions.
Supervision

Constant visual supervision for team Tug of War activities.

On-site supervision for initial instruction involving pairs.

The teacher/supervisor acts as:

- referee
- timer
- overseer of activity to determine participants in distress and act accordingly

A teacher who is providing instruction and is unfamiliar with tug of war techniques (e.g. no recent experience) must refrain from teaching the activity until assistance is provided by an appropriately trained staff or training is received.

Students must be informed that the use of equipment and the gymnasium are prohibited without supervision. In addition to verbal communication, the doors must be locked or signs must be posted indicating that students are not allowed to use the gym unless appropriately supervised.

Supervision Ratios

- 1 referee: each pull
- 1:16 teacher-to-student

First Aid

Follow the school’s first aid emergency response (consult Appendix E - Sample First Plan and Sample First Aid Emergency Response) and the school board’s concussion protocol (consult the Concussion section).

An emergency action plan and response to deal with evacuations and lock downs must be followed and communicated to students.

Also see Fundamentals of Safety section to view complete safety requirements.

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