Name/Title: The Joy of Community

Purpose of Event: The purpose of this community theme is for students to engage in community related activities as a way of recognizing and thanking local merchants, and raising awareness regarding what resources are available in the local and neighboring area for students and their families to seek out .

Suggested Grade Level: 4-5

Materials Needed: Individual event materials (see description), event descriptions, rules of the road, volunteer tips, map of events, many parent volunteers, a sunny day!

Description of Idea

The format for the day is free choice! All students are free to choose wherever they wish to go. All events are marked with community signs (each sign has "green for open, "red" for closed so students can decide whether they stay at that event or move along to another), and students carry lemonade tickets with them to turn in when thirst prevails. Parent volunteers run the events and attend a short training a half hour before the festivities begin. Event descriptions and "how to's" are given to volunteers. All staff members are free to engage in any and all activities. There's plenty of supervision without the tight structure that require teachers to supervise small groups throughout the day.

We begin with an Opening Ceremony on the front lawn and end with a school wide performance on the front lawn that all parents and friends are invited to. Since "community" is being celebrated, the students perform a jump rope routine to "What I Like About You." Additional volunteer jobs include a set-up crew, a lunch serving crew (we do an outdoor buffet), and a clean-up crew. A letter inviting parental participation is sent home 2 weeks prior to the Field Day.

Community Events:

Town Tennis: 3 Tennis Courts, 3 buckets of balls, 12 poly spots, 6 racquets. Three volunteers take six children a piece and toss tennis balls underhand to them. Children hit 4-6 forehands, then become a retriever, then rotate back in.

Town Baseball: 6 cone tees, 6 carpet squares, 6 hoops, 24 whiffle balls (4 for each), a bucket of water balloons (children last swing!). Children hit balls off tees, retrieve, and repeat. The last ball is a wet one! They retrieve again to prepare for the next group of excited children!

Town Driving Range: 10 carpet squares (with a hole in the middle for rubber tee), 8 right handed Jr. golf clubs, 2 left handed clubs, 10 small buckets of plastic golf balls with a dozen balls in them, open space! Volunteers (need one for every two children = 5 volunteers) are responsible for setting up students properly, and children hit a dozen balls. Once group is

finished, clubs are down and they retrieve to prepare the next group.

Town Soccer: 8 balls, 4 targets, a maze of cones. Children move through the maze dribbling with their feet and finish with a blast to the target! Balls are retrieved, children run back to start carrying the ball to prepare for the next turn. Repeat, then turn sign to "Open" for next group.

Transportation Center: 4 wagons, 4 scooters, 8 helmets, saran wrap or bakery wax paper sheets (for inside helmets), road signs, chalk for lines, 2 buckets of water, 2 sponges for "car wash." children follow road and obey traffic signs along the way. If their vehicle needs a washing, they can stop on the way back! Volunteers (2) prepare the next group by helping them get their helmets on.

Town Library: 3-4 books about towns, transportation, community workers, etc. This inside event requires 1 volunteer (invite the town librarian!) to read to a group of 5-10 students at a time. This is a nice rest for very hot children! After the story is read, the sign is turned to "Open."

News Center Nine: 4 tape recorders, interview questions. Send children off in pairs to interview others (children, staff, volunteers) about what they like! One volunteer gives suggestions as to how to "cover the community event."

Firefighters Fitness Challenge: Playground structure, number signs, large stuffed animals, 2 hoses on reels. Volunteers (2) send children through the structure with a large stuffed animal (they pretend they are saving a pet or someone by helping them "get out") Each pair goes to 10 stops including going down the "fire pole," driving the fire truck (steering wheel), and reeling or unreeling the fire hose before getting to the finish!

Community Sidewalk Murals: buckets of chalk, a large paved area, a basket of ideas (stores, apartment houses, town green, churches, town hall, hospital, airport, post office, police and fire station, etc.) children contribute to the mural throughout the Field Day. A volunteer outlines the area to be used and starts the mural by drawing a building or a house. This is a remarkable piece of artwork by days end!

Digi-walking: 4 digiwalker pedometers, a basket of photos (taken of various locations around outside of school). Volunteer presets DW's to an average stride length. Children (in pairs) choose a photo, and estimate how many steps it will take them to get there. They record their guess on scrap paper, and take off for their destination and back again. They have to walk! Upon their return, see how close their estimations are!

Hospital Tag: Medical bag (with prescriptive exercises in it), 4 cones to designate playing area, a "hospital area," two pinnies, one foam tagger. Volunteer opens event with 5-8 children, choosing a "germ spreader (tagger)," a medic (who unfreezes patients and assists them to the hospital), and a doctor who prescribes exercises (jumping jacks, push-ups, jogging, etc.). After doctor declares the patient well, they return to game!

Parachute Launch: Find a local stuffed animal that represents some event or place in your town or area (Red Sox bear, Monkey Boy, etc.), place it in the middle and have children stay low. On signal, launch it into kingdom come! Repeat! One volunteer is needed.

Town Recycling Center: Ask children to bring in one milk jug prior to field day. Collect newspapers in the meantime. Also need masking tape and clothes line rope or string. 1-2 volunteers help "visitors" make scoops and balls out of materials and then play catch with one another. Keep jugs on rope or string and return to children for them to keep!

Swimming Safety Video: TV, VCR, Red Cross swimming safety tape (Whales Tales), rug. This indoor event raises awareness regarding swimming safety. Students become engaged in conversation with a volunteer about where they go to swim in the area! This is also a nice break for children who are in need of a rest.

Lemonade Stand: Check with your local groups to see if they have one. Set it up and children can give tickets towards a cool drink! My students get three tickets to be used at their discretion.

Click here to see the Schedule the teacher follows.

Submitted by **Suzanne Klink** who teaches at Clark Elementary School in Amherst, NH. Thanks for contributing to PE Central! **Posted on PEC: 11/17/2001**.

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