

## Clap Relay

*Adapted from Collaboration Zone*



### Introduction

This activity teaches communication skills, improves team functioning, and works with groups of all sizes.

### Instructions

- Ask students to stand in a circle. Make sure they have plenty of space. Ask two adjacent students to demonstrate before you begin.
- The first participant and second participant will face each other and clap at the exact same moment.
- The second participant turns to the next person in the circle and they clap at the same time.
- This continues around the circle until participants have established a rhythm.
- Now speed it up - instruct students to go faster.
  - As students master each speed, instruct them to go even faster.
  - The facilitator's role is to find a rhythm that is just a little too fast for participants.
  - Variation for added challenge: if one person claps twice, reverse the direction!

### Discussion

- What cues did you use to make sure you were clapping on the same beat as your adjacent teammate?
- Was verbal or nonverbal communication used to accomplish your goals?
- Did increasing the speed make it more difficult to communicate with the team?
- Did you have to choose between clapping at the same time (accuracy) and clapping on the right beat (speed)?
- Did anyone experience frustration with themselves or with their teammates during the game?
- Can you identify other Essential Skills that were practiced in this activity?

### Reflecting & Connecting

- External pressure can make a team fall apart. External pressure in this game came from the facilitator increasing the tempo, requiring the team to work faster until they were unable to maintain focus. Recognize when outside pressure is affecting your ability to focus and function as a team.
- Effective teamwork requires communication. In some situations, nonverbal communication (in this case eye contact, a slight nod, or watching your adjacent teammate's hands closely) is faster and more effective than verbal communication (like counting to three before the clap).