Traffic Jam

Switch places, avoid chaos!

Overview

- # of Participants: **6+**
- Where to Play: **Indoors/Outdoors**
- Age of Participants: **Middle / High School**
- Approximate Time to Play: **10-20 minutes**
- Materials: **Chairs, answer key download**

Summary

- Teams must move from one end of the line to the other by following these three rules.
- Rules: players can only slide over into an empty chair, players can only leapfrog over an opposing player, and both teams can only move in one direction (Team 1 moves right, Team 2 moves left).
- Players will quickly realize there is some strategy needed to complete this challenge.
- Reset and retry until teams figure out the solution.

How to Play

Divide your group into two even and easily identifiable teams. You could use something like bandanas to distinguish the teams. Teams sit side by side on chairs with one empty chair between both groups. One team sits together on the far right and the other team sits together on the far left. The goal is for teams to move from one end of the line to the other, one person at a time, following these rules. First, players are only allowed to move if the empty chair is beside you, by sliding onto the empty chair. Second, if one person from the opposite team is between you and the chair, then you must "leapfrog" over them. The third rule is that team one can only move to their left, and team two can only move to their right. If any of the rules are broken, or if there are no legal moves left, then both teams must reset and return to their original starting positions. This might seem simple at first, but teams will quickly realize that this takes some strategy. For example, if one team sends one person all the way to the end to their final seat, the empty chair gets stranded in a spot where no one can move to it. Another common mistake is when a player slides into an empty chair before they should, leaving no way to get the empty chair back to a useful spot. This game takes some trial and error, but the goal is to allow the teams to figure the solution out themselves, without any help from the leader. So here's the solution: the trick is to make sure that once a team begins to move, they should never have two people from the same team sitting next to each other. If that happens, there won't be any way to get the empty chair back to a spot where their teammate will be able to use it. So, after a player slides into the empty chair, an opposing player needs to immediately leapfrog over them. If that first player tries to move again, they have created a situation where two people from the same team will now be sitting next to each other, and there's no way for that team to recover. Instead, the next person from the first team should slide into the empty chair. Now three members from the second team can make a move without being next to each other, and the empty chair is now in a spot that the first team can still use. In other words, teams cannot take turns making moves back and forth. Team one must slide, team two must leapfrog, then team two must immediately slide, now team two can leapfrog. After teams understand the order in which they must slide/leapfrog, they shouldn't have too much difficulty completing the challenge.

Link to the solution!

Watch the Video Explanation Here!