

# **Asthma Adventures**

## **Asthma Camp Activities Manual**

**was developed for**  
The Consortium on Children's Asthma Camps

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# Triggers and Early Warning Signs



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## Goals



*To identify the various triggers that can start or worsen asthma.*



*To determine each individual's early warning signs.*



*To identify and properly sequence early warning signs.*



# Trigger Hunt

Ages 5-14

## Activity Objective:

Participants will actively identify their triggers and then discuss relevant issues in a creative format. Since it is often difficult to fully avoid triggers, participants will have the opportunity to share their feelings about being restricted from certain activities or things.



## Instructions:

- The group leader prepares cards prior to the session, which depict numerous triggers. These may be pictures cut from magazines or pre-drawn pictures. Multiple cards of common triggers should be made. These cards are then either hidden around a room, or if weather permits, hidden within a certain area outside.
- (See Trigger List on page 46 or use ready-made trigger cards on page 46-48.)
- Participants hunt for triggers, which can be the pictures or actual items. They will collect and create a collage of the triggers. Accompanying the collage they can either write, label or discuss the following:
  - Which triggers worsen their asthma?
  - Which triggers are most difficult to stay away from?
  - What is one idea that helps to avoid triggers?
  - Which trigger do you wish you didn't have?
  - How do you feel about your asthma triggers?

### Materials Needed:

- Prepared cards which depict asthma triggers
- Paper/large cardboard
- Glue
- Pencils
- Magazines

# Trigger List:

Use the following list for activities in this chapter:

Bug spray	Emotions	Paint smell
Car fumes	Exercise	Perfumes
Cats	Furry pets	Pollen
Cigarette smoke	Grass	Sinus infection
Cold air	Hair spray	Trees
Dogs	Head Colds	Virus
Dust mites	Mold	Weather changes

Copy and cut on dotted lines

**Cats**

**Dogs**

**Furry Pets**

**Weather  
Changes**



**Cold Air**

**Head Colds**

**Virus**

**Sinus  
Infection**

**Paint  
Smells**

**Car  
Fumes**

**Cigarette  
Smoke**

**Grass**

**Pollen**

**Dust  
Mites**

**Exercise**

**Bug  
Spray**

**Hair  
Spray**

**Trees**

**Perfumes**

**Mold**

**Emotions**

# Trigger Pictionary

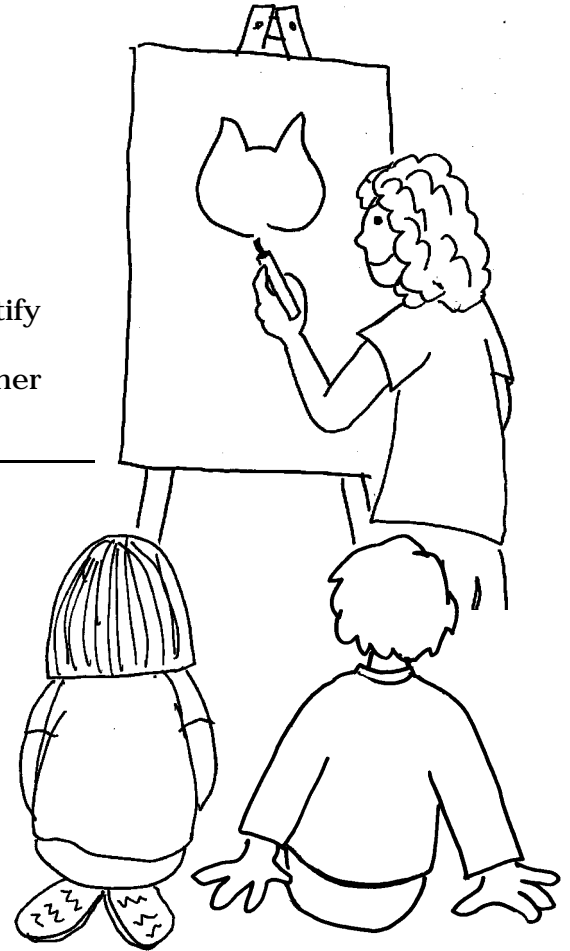
Age 7-14

## Activity Objective:

Using a well-known game form, the participants will identify the various asthma triggers. This activity emphasizes the commonalities of asthma triggers. The groups work together to win the game.

## Instructions:

- The group leader prepares index cards with asthma triggers. See Trigger List and cards on pages 46-48.
- Some of the cards will have “all play” on them. This denotes that both teams draw the picture at the same time.
- Participants are divided into two groups. Each member of the group has an opportunity to draw an asthma trigger.
- The selected person picks a card with the asthma trigger they must draw.
- The group members try to identify the trigger as quickly as they can. If they are able to within the given time frame they receive a point.



*Optional:* When a team member wins their round they could also receive a piece of a puzzle. This is another game dynamic. Each piece creates a portion of the picture, of a lung. The first team that gets all the pieces and is able to assemble them correctly would be the winning team.

## Materials Needed:

- Index cards with asthma triggers written on them
- Timer
- 2 blackboards
- Chalk or mural paper
- Pencils
- 2 dry erase boards with markers

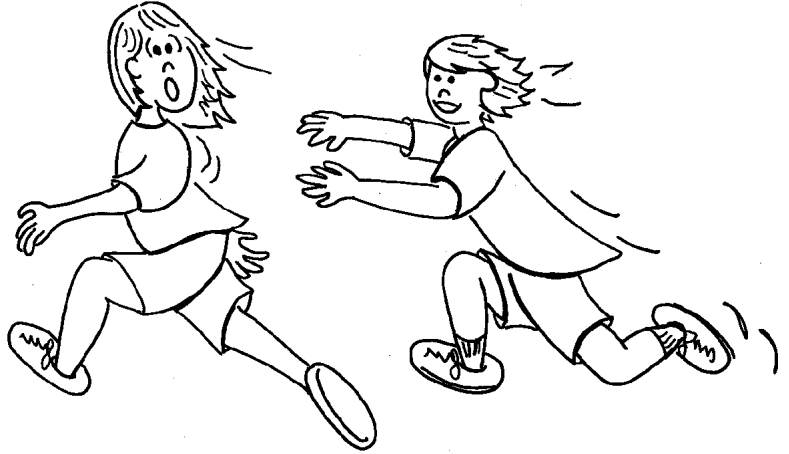


# Trigger Tag

Ages 5-11

## Activity Objective:

An active and fast-paced game that gives each child the opportunity to identify and “claim” his or her asthma triggers.



## Instructions:

- Group leader prepares pictures of various triggers on cards (see list on page 46 or use ready-made cards on page 46-48) which will then be attached to a participant’s body.
- All participants choose a trigger card and attach it to their shirt with tape.
- Each participant will have the opportunity to be the “tagger”. When selected, they will run around and try to tag the person who is wearing their personal asthma trigger.
- Once the “tagger” has caught those who wear his or her asthma triggers another person is elected to have a turn as the “trigger tagger”.
- At the completion of a game the “tagger” could discuss how the triggers effect them and how they prevent exposure to their triggers.
- Safety Zones can be designated.

## Materials Needed:

- Variety of asthma trigger pictures attached to cards (see page 46-48 for Trigger List and ready-made trigger cards)
- Tape
- Scissors
- Large area to run around

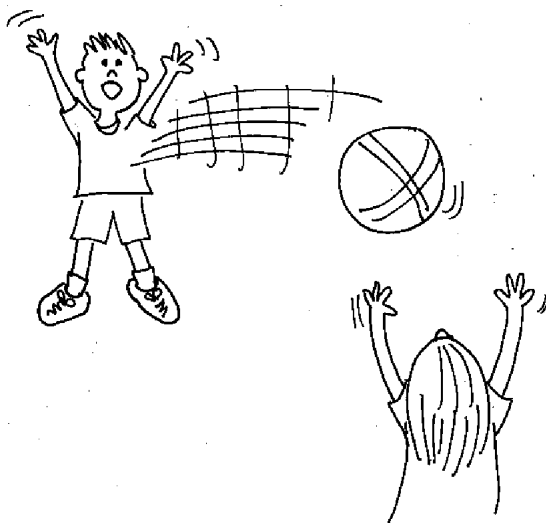


# Trigger Ball

Ages 7-14

## Activity Objective:

A modified and active game of volleyball will help players to reinforce their actions when triggers are introduced into their environment.



## Instructions:

- Two teams should be established for this volleyball game with points awarded exactly like traditional volleyball.
- Leader will explain the rules for each team; one team will be the “Triggers” and the other team will be the “Responses”
- Traditional rules for volleyball apply, however with an educational twist:

“Trigger” team will be the serving team, and as they serve the ball, they shout one asthma trigger. It is not necessary for each player who touches the ball on the serving team to shout a trigger. (See Trigger List and ready-made cards on page 46-48.)

“Response” team will return the ball, and EACH PERSON who touches the ball in an effort to return it will shout either “AVOID” or “OK” based on their own personal experience with the established trigger that has put the ball into play.

- Teams should switch roles each time the ball switches sides for serving. Therefore, every time a team serves the ball, they will shout triggers, and those receiving will shout their personal responses.

## Variation: Blanket Trigger Ball

- A volleyball net may be used, but it is not necessary. This game will use a blanket and also simulate the motion of the diaphragm as it moves up and down during breathing.
- Teams of four should be established so that there will be one person holding each corner of a blanket. The serving (or “Trigger”) team should serve the ball by placing it in the middle of the blanket, lowering and then raising it quickly as a team to allow the ball to become airborne. Remember to shout a trigger when the ball is served!
- The opposing team must catch the volleyball in their blanket, with each player shouting their own response (AVOID or OK) and toss the ball back again.

### Materials Needed:

- Volleyball net or 2 blankets
- Volleyball(s)
- Trigger List (page 46)



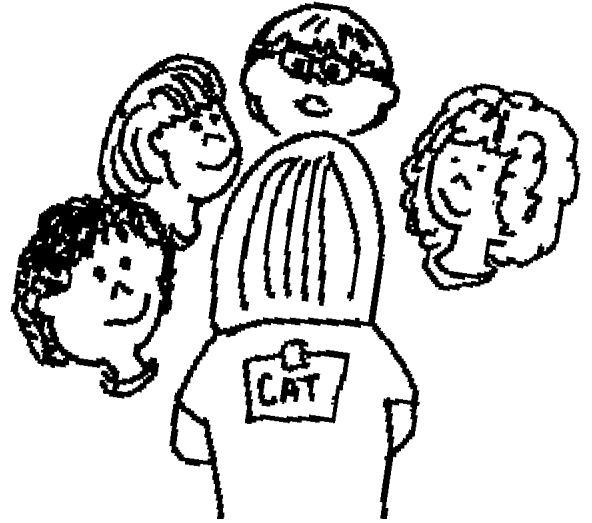


# Ten Trigger Questions

Ages 7-12

## Activity Objective:

This activity allows participants to identify their asthma triggers while having a lot of fun and laughs.



## Instructions:

- Group leader prepares small cards; which visually depict the various triggers. (See Trigger List and cards on pages 46-48.)
- A group member chooses a card from a container. The card is attached (with tape) to a chosen participant's back and they are unaware of the card's identity.
- Participant then asks the group members up to 10 questions in an attempt to guess which trigger he or she is wearing.
- *Variation:* Divide the group into two teams. A group member chooses a card from a container. The teams ask that person 10 questions in order to identify the trigger.

## Materials Needed:

- Prepared cards with asthma trigger pictures (see page 46-48 for ready-made cards)
- Container
- Tape



# Trigger Tribute

Ages 7- 14

## Activity Objective:

Through the use of art media, participants look for visual pictures or items representing their triggers and express their feelings about the difficulties in avoiding them. The collage provides a concrete representation for participants.



## Instructions:

- Group leader provides magazines, scissors, glue and paper.
- Participants choose items from nature or magazines that trigger their asthma. This activity can be done outside.
- A collage is created with the pictures or items, which are glued on heavy paper or poster board.
- Participants write next to the pictures of the collage the difficulties or problems in staying away from each trigger.
- This can also be done as a group collage with each child contributing a picture and written part.
- At the completion of the project participants explain their picture. An option would be to video each presentation.
- The art work can be showcased for all to see.

## Materials Needed:

- Magazines
- Glue
- Scissors
- Pens or pencils
- Materials gathered from nature in the camp environment
- Thick paper or poster board

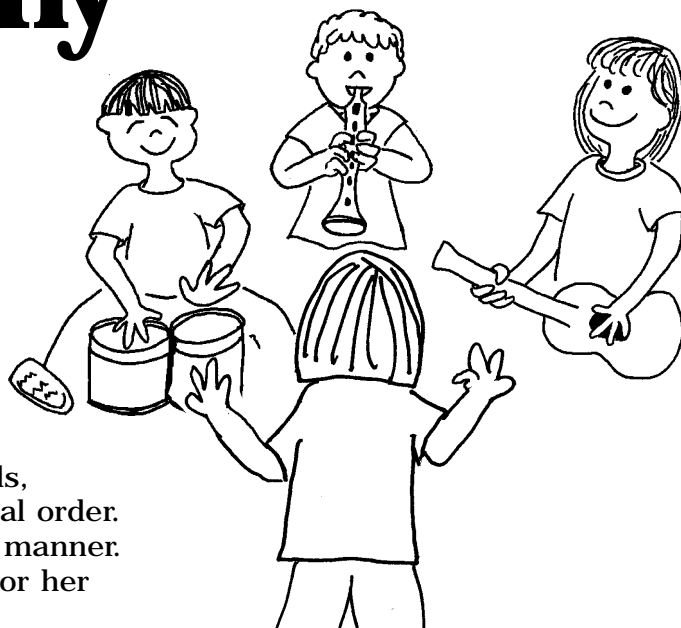


# Orchestra of Early Warning Signs

Age 7-12

## Activity Objective:

By translating the asthma sounds associated with various early warning signs to music sounds, the children identify and place them in sequential order. This activity heightens their awareness in a fun manner. Each child has the opportunity to “conduct” his or her individual early warning signs.



## Instructions:

- The participants choose an instrument from a selection of children’s musical instruments. If instruments aren’t available, group members can create instruments. Items that can be used to create musical instruments include: pots, pans, glasses filled with water to different amounts, sticks, rocks, etc. (See page 16 for more ideas.)
- A conductor is chosen who will assign each person to represent their sounds of early warning signs, ie, wheezing, sneezing, coughing. (Which early warning signs do you experience and notice first, second, third, fourth.)
- The above asthma sounds are then translated into musical rhythms and sounds. The conductor directs each section in accordance with the sequence of his or her early warning signs.
- Each child will have an opportunity to act as conductor.
- *Optional:* A tape recorder can be used so each conductor could have a cassette tape of his or her orchestration.

## Materials Needed:

- Children’s musical instruments
- Tape recorder
- Cassette tapes (optional)

If instruments are going to be made, some supplies might include:

- Beans
- Masking tape
- Toilet paper or paper towel tubes

- Bowls
- Rubber bands
- Wax paper
- Bells
- Pots and pans
- Glasses filled with water to different amounts
- Sticks
- Rocks, etc.



# Peak Flow Bombardment

Ages 7-14

## Activity Objective:

To reinforce the helpfulness of peak flow monitoring and to develop an understanding of peak flow ranges.

## Instructions:

- Group is divided in half.
- Each team member is given a red, yellow or green sticker, which is placed on each person's back. The colored stickers represent the peak flow zone. The same number of each color sticker is divided evenly. The red sticker is worth 1 point, the yellow sticker is worth 2 points, the green sticker is worth 3 points.
- The area you will be playing in is divided in half and a mid-line boundary is marked. One team on each side.
- Each team is given a rubber ball.
- The object of the game is to throw and hit other team players with the rubber ball without them catching it. When a player is hit by the ball, they are out and they sit out of the game.
- If a ball is caught then the person who throws the ball is out and the team that caught the ball gets double points.
- Once a player is out they have to take their peak flow and plot it on a predesigned peak flow graph. The graph is divided up into appropriate ranges. (See next page for peak flow ranges.)



- The team gets the appropriate points depending upon which range their peak flow is in. (To do this each child needs to know their baseline.)
- *Variation:* Prior to playing each child could create their peak flow graph, coloring in their peak flow zones.
- Group leader is the scorekeeper.
- When a team loses all their players, the game is finished and the other team gets a bonus 10 points.
- Tally all the points and the team with the highest points wins.

(continued)

## **Peak Flow Ranges**

*Green Zone: 80%-100% of personal best*

*Yellow Zone: 50%-79% of personal best*

*Red Zone: less than 50% of personal best*

### **Materials Needed:**

- 2 rubber balls,
- Red, yellow, green stickers (or colored paper and tape)
- Red, yellow and green crayons
- Peak flow graph (see copy)
- Pen
- Peak flow meters
- Mouthpieces

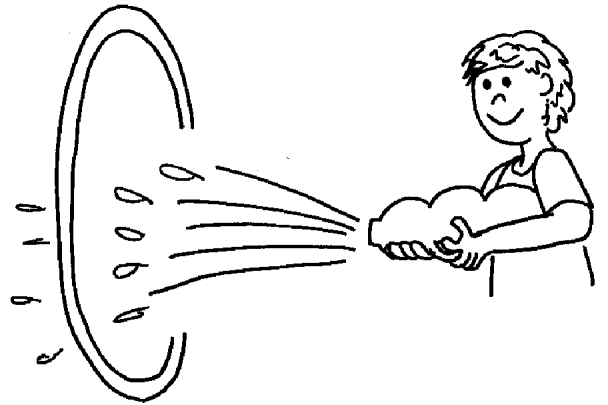


# Obsta-Cool Course

Ages 5-14

## Activity Objective:

An obstacle course will be the highlight of this team-based race to answer questions about triggers and early warning signs for asthma. Lots of exercise and knowledge will be gained as teams compete to win the race with correct answers.



## Instructions:

- Two teams should be established for this obstacle course race game. A stopwatch or watch with second hand can be used to keep track of time for each player.
- Runners will take their marks at the beginning of the course.
- Group leaders will pose a question (see Asthma Education Game Question list on page 65), shout “GO”, and the runners will go to the first activity station, answer the question and then complete a task.
- Correct answers are rewarded with points (the runner’s team will get the points; group leader is the scorekeeper):
  - 5 points for correct answer
  - 5 points for completing each task
- After the question is answered (or the counselor provides the informational answer), the same runners take their marks and get ready for the next question and challenge. Group leaders pose the question, shouts “GO”, runners move to the next station to answer that question and complete the task.
- The race continues until all challenges are complete.
- After the first two runners complete the race, the next two representatives get ready to run their race.
- The team with the most cumulative points, wins the game.
- 4-5 activities per race are recommended.

## Wet/Wild Obstacle Course Activities (Near waterfront, pool, sprinklers, etc.):

- 1) Drop-kicking a non-latex water balloon.
- 2) Jumping rope in the sprinkler spray.
- 3) Shooting a squirt gun at a predetermined target.
- 4) Transfer water from one filled bucket to an empty, waiting bucket.
- 5) Throw a water balloon through a tire/hula-hoop target.
- 6) Carry an ice cube from one location to another.
- 7) Pop a water balloon by sitting on it.
- 8) Swim a lap or complete a short canoe lap.
- 9) Other creative non-latexwater challenges, depending on materials available.

*(continued)*

## Land-lubbers Course (Dry)

- 1) Leap-frog a team member.
- 2) Crawl through the legs of another team member.
- 3) Alternate feet through lined up hula hoops/tires.
- 4) Set up two cones opposite each other; run a figure 8 around them.
- 5) Throw a ball, football or frisbee into a circular target (tire, hula hoop).
- 6) Potato Sack Race (or use trash liners).
- 7) Carry an egg on a spoon from one location to another.
- 8) Shoot and make a basket (if basketball court available).
- 9) Chew fresh bubble gum and blow 3 consecutive large bubbles.
- 10) Other creative outdoor challenges, depending on materials available.

## Alternative Game (No Water):

This alternative can be played in a gym, on a field or grassy area.

- Group leader can pose question to players and they can do the following activities to get to the answer they feel is correct:

- 1) Leapfrog a team member.
- 2) Crawl through the legs of another team member.
- 3) Alternate feet through hula hoops or tires lined up on the ground.
- 4) Figure 8 a set of cones.
- 5) Throw a ball, football or frisbee through a circular target.
- 6) Other short activities, depending on materials available.

### Materials Needed:

- Hose
- Water balloons
- Sprinkler
- Jump rope(s)
- Super Soaker or water squirters (even spray bottles!)
- 4 buckets
- Balls
- Frisbees
- Tire or hula hoop (circular target)
- Poster board and markers for signs
- 2 stop watches or watches with second hand, if timing
- Asthma Education Game Question List on page 65

# Asthma Education Game Questions

## Page 1 of 2

- 1) What are three things that happen in your lungs when your asthma worsens?
  - increase of mucus
  - inflammation in the bronchial tubes
  - muscles around the bronchial tubes get tighter
- 2) List 3 helpful things you can do to take care of your asthma.
  - check your peak flows
  - take your medication
  - avoid your asthma triggers
  - watch for your early warning signs
  - keep an asthma diary
  - have & follow your asthma action plan
  - have & follow your asthma exercise plan
- 3) Show the correct way to use an inhaler.
- 4) Show the correct way to use your peak flow meter.
- 5) What is a quick-relief medication?
- 6) What type of medication is a controller?
- 7) Name 3 kinds of asthma triggers.
- 8) Name 3 early warning signs.
- 9) When you have trouble with your asthma who could you tell?
- 10) What are dust mites?
- 11) What is one thing you should do before you exercise if you have exercise-induced asthma?
  - have an asthma exercise plan
  - take your bronchodilator 20 minutes prior to exercise
  - warm up
- 12) What is something you could wear when it is cold out to help your asthma from being worsened by cold air?
  - Wear a scarf over your nose and mouth
- 13) Someone is smoking near you. What could you do?
- 14) What could you do when you notice your early warning signs?
- 15) What is the emergency phone number to use in case of an asthma emergency?
- 16) What is wheezing?
- 17) Name the three zones in peak flow monitoring.
- 18) Which zone is the emergency zone in peak flow monitoring?
- 19) Name all of your asthma medications.
- 20) Name your bronchodilator and describe how it works.

*(continued)*

# Asthma Education Game Questions

Page 2 of 2

- 21) What is wrapped around your bronchial tubes?
- 22) What is mucus?
- 23) Name three triggers you might find outside.
- Pollen
  - Trees
  - Smoke
  - Weather
  - Animals
  - Pollutants
  - Odors
  - Flowers
- 24) Name three triggers you might find inside your house.
- Dust mites
  - Mold
  - Pets
  - Feather pillows
  - Cockroaches
  - Scented candles
- 25) When you blow into the peak flow meter should you blow slow or hard and fast?
- 26) Should you place the peak flow meter in your mouth with your lips closed tightly around it?
- 27) True or false, a sinus infection can make your asthma worse.
- 28) How would you describe a “spacer” and why is it used?
- 29) Name 3 environmental control ideas.
- Encase pillow and mattress with allergy-proof encasing
  - Remove all pets from house
  - Damp dust
  - Remove feather pillows
  - Limit stuffed animals in room
  - Use central air
  - Bathrooms should not be carpeted
  - No smoking in the house
  - Wash bedding in very hot, hot water

# Pop or Play Balloon Game

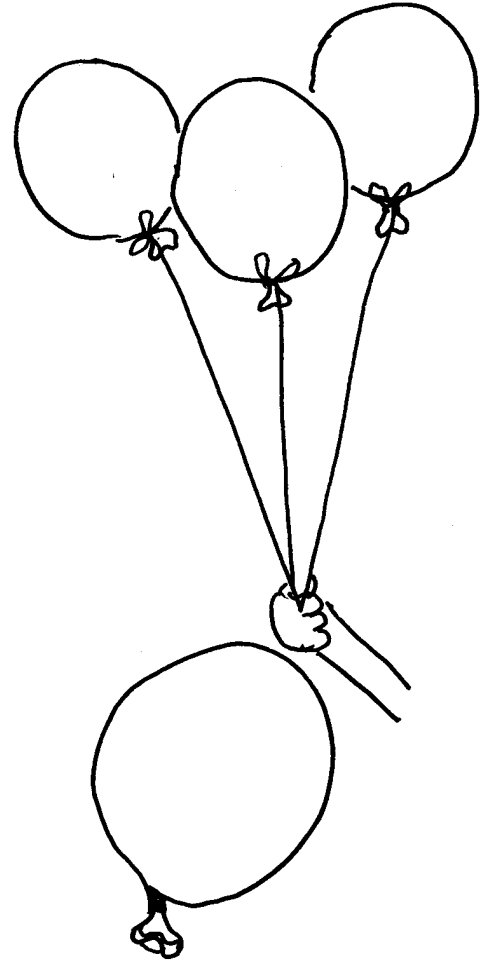
Ages 7-14

## Activity Objective:

This fun and messy activity incorporates a game and race to learn about environmental control issues.

## Instructions:

- Preblown non-latex balloons and disposable safety razors are given to each camper. Shaving cream will be on hand for each player who will take a small amount of shaving cream for slathering all over the non-latex balloon.
- Each player who successfully shaves their non-latex balloon without popping it will get the chance to answer a question about environmental control (see page 68 for Environmental Control Questions).
- Group leader(s) serve as scorekeepers; correct answers are rewarded with 5 points each.
- After the question is posed and either correctly answered or the answer is explained (if the contestant provides the incorrect answer), the activity repeats with another small amount of shaving cream on the non-latex balloon.
- The camper who has accumulated the most points wins!
- Collect disposable safety razors at completion of game.



## Materials Needed:

- Non-latex balloons, pre-blown (enough for at least 3 to 4/camper) and tied
- Shaving cream or foam
- Disposable safety razors (for younger campers, keep protective tops on to avoid cuts)
- Environmental Control Questions on page 68

# Environmental Control Questions

- 1) What is the most common indoor allergen that triggers asthma? . . . . . Dust Mite
- 2) Name an allergen that is microscopic in size? . . . . . Dust Mite
- 3) What feeds on food particles, dead skin cells of humans & animal dander? . . . . . Dust Mite
- 4) Mattresses, pillows, bedding and carpeting have the highest population of what? . . . Dust Mite
- 5) Wash bedding in what temperature of water? Very hot, hot or cold water. . . . . Very hot (130°F)
- 6) Allergy proof encase what item in your bedroom?. . . . . Pillows, mattresses, box springs
- 7) Tape the zippers of what item?. . . . . Allergy proof encasings
- 8) Take your \_\_\_\_\_ on vacation . . . . . Own pillow, action plan, medication
- 9) Use pillows made of what? . . . . . Dacron, polyester or comforel
- 10) Vacuuming should be done how often?. . . . . One time per week
- 11) Leave room for how long after vacuuming? . . . . . One – two hours after cleaning
- 12) What type of mop should be used? . . . . . Damp
- 13) Wash bed linens how often?. . . . . Every other week
- 14) Stuffed animals may be kept in the \_\_\_\_\_. . . . . Freezer
- 15) Furnace filters should be changed how often? . . . . . Monthly
- 16) Try to avoid living on what level of a house?. . . . . Basement
- 17) Avoid what type of pillow? . . . . . Feather
- 18) Avoid having what type of flooring? . . . . . Carpet
- 19) What should be kept out of your bedroom? . . . . . Furry Pets
- 20) Wash your \_\_\_\_\_ after coming in contact with a cat . . . . . Hands
- 21) Bee pollen capsules may contain what type of pollen? . . . . . Ragweed
- 22) Can mold be found indoor, outdoor or both?. . . . . Both
- 23) Molds thrive on what?. . . . . Moisture, space to grow and outdoor particles (leaves, paper, dirt)
- 24) Outdoor mold is present most of the year except when? . . . . . During a snow cover
- 25) The peak mold season is? . . . . . End of summer through early fall
- 26) Hayrides would be a good thing to do if you have a mold allergy, True or False? . . . . . False
- 27) Feathers can be found where? . . . . . Pillows, beds, comforters, jackets, sleeping bags, birds
- 28) What pets are allergy safe? . . . . . Fish, snakes, frogs
- 29) What pollinates during March, April, and early May? . . . . . Trees
- 30) During pollen season keep your windows \_\_\_\_\_? . . . . . Shut
- 31) The best time of day to be outdoors during pollen season is \_\_\_\_\_. . . . . Late afternoon & evening
- 32) Amounts of pollens are heaviest during what time of day? . . . . . Early morning hours
- 33) When it comes to grass, what activities should be avoided? . . . . . Cutting, raking & bagging
- 34) Avoid freshly cut grass for \_\_\_\_\_ hours? . . . . . 6 hours
- 35) What type of bug can worsen asthma? . . . . . Cockroach
- 36) Cigarette smoke is a harmful irritant, True or False? . . . . . True