

FACILITATING AN INTERACTIVE AGENDA

- **Give Good Instructions.** This isn't as easy as it seems. It's a good idea to practice beforehand with a co-worker, friend or family member.
- **Observe Carefully.** Take mental or written notes of what happens and what is said during the exercise so that you can use this information when you process.
- **Know When to Participate and When to Observe.** You should always participate in Warm-up Questions and evaluations. You should generally not participate in Springboard activities that are physical (such as a tag exercise) so that you are able to observe dynamics and keep the exercise safe, but there are some Springboards (such as THE WIND BLOWS and BAG TOSS) where you can participate and observe at the same time. Give this question careful consideration when you are planning the agenda.
- **Enjoy Yourself.** While your job is to keep order in the group and insure that youth are learning, remember that humor and fun are not only OK, they can also be desirable and productive. Letting your own style come out as you facilitate is one of the powerful and pleasurable aspects of the interactive process.
- **Don't Panic if an Exercise Isn't Working.** When things don't work, don't stop the exercise unless there is real physical danger. Continue to watch what happens, then use that experience to help the group learn from how they dealt with this dysfunctional situation. With skillful processing, the fact that the exercise didn't work as intended can be a more powerful learning experience than if it had worked.
- **Evaluate the Effectiveness of your Selections.** After the session, think about these questions: What worked and why did it work? What happened that you didn't expect and how did you deal with it? Did you select exercises that were at the right level of risk? What level of resistance did the group have? What level of resistance did you have, and how did you react to those feelings?