**Getting Kids' Attention**

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(without yelling, stomping, being grumpy or laying on the guilt)

Sometimes it's just after a physical game, sometimes it's because there's been a lapse in the programme, sometimes it's just a bunch of kids who have a lot to talk about, but there's almost always a time when you'll need to bring the kids' attention back to the front and quiet down the group.

Here are a few things that I've used over the years.   Some have worked well, some have worked for a period of time.   Give them a try and see what you think.

**'Eye Contact'**

When I need all eyes on me, I yell “eye contact”. Everyone is expected to turn and stare directly at my eyes.   I time how long it takes and we keep a running competition going.     If there are a few new kids, I'll often have a practice run early on where I get the kids to look all over the place and wait for 'eye contact'.

**'Cheer Ball'**

Get a ball (size isn't that important, but it's best if it's brightly coloured).   When it starts to get too loud or the kids are all over the place, throw the ball in the air.   While the ball is in the air, the kids are allowed to cheer, clap and stomp their feet, but the minute you have the ball back in your hands, there has to be absolute silence.   Generally if it doesn't pick everyone up first time, if you throw it up again, the rest of the kids will catch on.

**'Can you hear me?'**

If I'm in front of a group that's a bit loud, I'll whisper “Put your hand on your nose if you can hear me”.   Then I'll put my hand on my nose.   Repeat your request.   As the kids in the front hear you and do what you've asked, the others towards the back will start to catch on.   Keep your voice quiet and expect to have to repeat your sentence 4-5 times depending on the size of the group.

Some other requests (think of some others, too- they can be fun or serious!):

Put your hands on your head

Stand up

Shake your head

Lie down

**'Mirror, mirror'**

Have you ever played the game where two people stand facing each other and they form a mirror?   One person moves very slowly and the other person mirrors their actions so that onlookers can't really tell who is mirroring whom.   This one needs to be explained to your group, but doesn't rely on your voice to get attention.

When you want the kids to focus back to you and/or to quieten, start to move your hands out as if you were playing the mirror game.   As kids catch on, they'll start to mirror your actions.   Keep going until the group is doing it.   If you have time, allow one of the kids to come up and be the mover.