

YMCA Basketball Team Circle Activities for 6-7-Year-Olds

Key Idea	Description	Page ¹
Four Core Values	Gather children into a circle with one ball. “Everyone hand the ball to the one next to you until it makes it around the whole circle.” After the ball has gone around the circle one time, have it passed to you. “We play basketball to be more healthy and fit, but it also teaches us to become good teammates and good people. This season we will talk about four qualities of a good person and teammate: <i>caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility</i> . Our team needs to have all of these qualities in our practices and games. Remember—we can’t be a team without each of you doing your part. Let’s pass the ball to each other and say one of the care values before you pass. This will help you remember to use all four of the qualities so we can work together.”	84
Responsibility	Gather children into a group. “When you come to practice, you should do three things: (1) Be ready to play. (2) Learn and improve your skills and work with others. (3) Have fun. I’m going to give you a way to remember these three things. It’s called a ‘team motto.’ Our team motto is <i>Play hard, play fair, and have fun!</i> Let’s say it together out loud. That’s great. Be sure to remember our team motto and put it into practice.”	87
Responsibility	Gather children into a group between two cones about 10 feet apart. Stand in the middle of the circle with a ball. “I am going to show you two different ways to handle the same situation. Think about which is the best way to handle this.” Choose a player to receive a pass from you. Make a bad pass and then stomp angrily away from the group. Retrieve the ball and make another bad pass. This time, run to get the ball and make a pass that goes directly to the player. “If you think the first response is the way to handle making a bad pass, stand next to this cone. If you think the second way is better, stand next to this one.” Ask players to explain their choices. “It’s important to be a good sport in basketball.” Highlight how and why. “That’s being responsible to your teammates.”	90
Honesty	Gather children into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. “What is a foul?” Listen to their responses. Choose a player to help demonstrate responses (include pushing, bumping players, and tripping). “Should you admit to a foul if no one sees it? Those who think yes, stand at this cone. Those who think no, stand at this one.” Wait for children to choose. “When you know you’ve fouled, you should raise your hand. You should never take unfair advantage of other players. Can you think of other ways honesty is practiced on the court?” Listen to responses and discuss. “All of those show honesty.”	93

¹ This page number refers to pages in the “Plans for 6- to 7-Year-Olds” document found on the “Season and Practice Plans” page in the YMCA’s **Coaching Basketball** online course.

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Responsibility	Gather children into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. Choose two players to help role play. Set up a triangle of you and the two players. Let the children know you're role-playing with them. Each of you take turns passing. When it's your turn, miss the pass and role-play yourself as a player: "I couldn't get that pass! It was your fault—you made a bad pass!" Now as coach: "I want you to think about players who make excuses and blame others for their mistakes. Stand at this cone if you think it's okay to make excuses when you make mistakes. Stand at this cone if you think you should try to learn	96
Caring	Gather children into a circle. Stand in the middle of the circle with a ball. Choose two children to pass the ball with you. "We're going to work on our passing skills." Pass repeatedly to them and not the others. "Tell me how you felt to have only two players get the passes." Listen to their responses. "Sharing the ball with your teammates shows you care about them. What other things can you do to show you care about your teammates?" Their responses should include encouragement, positive comments for good play, forgiving players who make mistakes, and so on. "Good. Those are all ways you can show you care."	99
Responsibility	Gather children into a circle. "I want everyone to run in a circle, following the person in front of you, without bumping into each other. Keep a space about as long as a bicycle between you, and don't go ahead of the person in front of you." Encourage children to run slowly enough to follow all the directions. Continue activity for one minute. "Everyone stop. Did you bump into each other? Did anyone get upset with the person in front of you? You kept your body under control by not going ahead of the person in front of you. You kept your emotions under control by not getting upset with the person ahead of you—they couldn't move any faster since you were all running in a circle as a group. Everyone can stay safe and learn when everyone is responsible for themselves."	102
Responsibility	Gather children into a circle. Stand in the center of the circle with a ball. Ask children to call to you and raise their hand if they are in a good position for a pass. Dribble the ball inside the circle, but do not pass to anyone. Continue for about one minute. "Did I share the ball with anyone?" Wait for their responses. "Do you think that is good teamwork? What is good teamwork?" Listen to their responses. Repeat the activity, but this time pass to players who call and raise their hands. "Teamwork is when all players are working together, not just keeping the ball to themselves. Responsible team members get in position to receive a good pass. They don't always pass to the same person. And they always work hard."	106

Key Idea	Description	Page¹
Caring	Gather children into a group near the basket. Have a ball ready. Ask a child in the group to pass to you. Shoot at the basket and miss completely. Retrieve the ball and make a bad pass. "That shot wasn't very good, was it? How about that pass? Those were mistakes. What should you say to your teammates when they make mistakes?" Listen to their responses. "What could you say to make your teammate feel better? What could you say to make her feel worse?" Listen to their responses. Have players change the unsupportive, negative comments to positive ones. "It's very important to forgive mistakes and be understanding of others, just as you would want them to be of you. Making mistakes is part of learning. Saying something that makes your teammates feel better shows you care about them."	109
Respect	Gather children into a group. "What have you learned about basketball this season?" Listen to their responses. "What does respect have to do with playing basketball or any sports? It takes many years to master the game of basketball, so basketball deserves your respect. Every year there are new skills to learn and improve on; every year you play, you'll get better. That's why you need to come back next year! What examples of players showing respect have you seen this basketball season?" Listen to their responses and discuss.	112

