



## Benefits of Cooperative Games in Education

*By Suzanne Lyons M.A., M.A*

1. Cooperative Games reduce aggression.
2. Cooperative Games increase pro-social skills (e.g. sharing, helping).
3. They're fun! Joyful! Preferred by young children.
4. Cooperative games have all of the benefits of cooperative learning as well as play, since they are a form of both!
5. Enhance communication skills of autistic and socially withdrawn children.
6. Cooperative games are inclusive so promote a “sense of belonging”.
7. Cooperative games build empathy.
8. Cooperative games help develop problem-solving skills.
9. Preparation for cooperative learning teaching strategies.
10. Cooperative games provide a break from excess competition. Competition has downsides including anxiety and increase of inequity. Yet most schooling is competitively structured. For this reason it is important to give children a break from excess competition.

11. Classroom Management: They prevent emotional meltdowns / embarrassment/meanness that can occur in competitive situations.
12. Cooperative games can promote group identity. Yet they avoid the trap of in-group favoritism and out-group discrimination.
13. Active engagement for all with no down time: Since play is inclusive, no one wastes class time sitting idly on the sidelines.
14. Movement practice and skills development in psychologically safe environment.
15. They prepare kids for working life where team-playing is the norm.
16. Foster friendships by facilitating enjoyable interactions.
17. They teach new norm: cooperation versus competition. This helps build a positive social climate, which feels safe and enjoyable to children.
18. Cooperative games open the heart because they activate mutual appreciation, and feelings of love and kindness.
19. They allow kids to express the inherent human drive to cooperate; a sense of relaxed well-being results.
20. They teach cooperative skills: Cooperation is an essential skill with a thousand benefits including that it is necessary for social relationships, success in the workplace, and for peaceful living in the larger society.
21. Cooperative games teach kindness and fairness and demonstrate the increased productivity of working together rather than against each other. Thus they model peaceful and equitable social interaction needed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global community. In other words, cooperative games

help build a better world, and this is their ultimate benefit for everyone—children and grown-ups alike.