

# The Mat Game

*I use this activity to give me an incredible snapshot of the group of kids I'm working with, AND to set my expectations in a fun way.*

## **Objectives:**

*See how students interact.*

- Who leads? Who follows? Who wants to hide?
- Who bullies? Who does/doesn't listen to others? Who is loud?
- What language (positive or negative) do students use?

*See how students approach problem solving.*

- Who jumps in without thought?
- Who thinks but doesn't act?
- Who fails once and gives up or makes "makes scene"?
- Who learns from mistakes or from watching others?

*See how fairly students play.*

- Who will try and cheat?
- Who will dob/complain about others?
- Who cares more about winning than relationships or playing fair?

## **How I do it:**

- I tell the students the instructions, but not my objectives.
- They all have a turn, THEN talk about what I have seen (positive & negative).
- Then I talk about what I am looking for in my students. "They listen to others. They cooperate. They fail without drama, lift themselves up and go again. They want to "win" but not by cheating"

## **Instructions:**

- Students are in teams (3-30kids). Teacher determines size of teams depending on the size of the mats, size of students and degree of difficulty.
- Each team has two gym mats. Two teams compete against each other in a race. I then do a round-robin championship playoff.
- The floor is "lava" and they must use the gym mats to get to the other end of the hall (30m). If they touch the floor you can make them start again or give them a 10 second penalty. The best way is to slide one mat forward, get the team on that, then slide the other mat up past.
- Once students reach the other end they must ALL touch the wall, and then run the mats back (allowed to touch the floor) and set them up in their original position.

