

## **MOBILITY SHUFFLE**

*(also called The Title I Shuffle)*

Mobility is an ongoing issue in many of our schools. This activity was developed to provide participants with an opportunity to experience the disruption and displacement mobility can cause.

### **You will need the following items:**

A four-color coded system (name tags of different colors, stickers, folders, etc.)

Timer or stop watch

Whistle or bell or noise to signal it is time to move

A distraction activity (power point, brainstorming activity, lesson with quiz)

Additional Alt supplies: notebooks and writing utensils of varying types – see \*\* at the end of instructions

### **PRE-ACTIVITY PIECES:**

Having an idea of how many participants will be in attendance is important. You will need to divide your group in to 4 different equal color coded groups without them knowing. The four colors can be the colors you choose but each color will represent a different level of mobility; highly mobile (move every time), mobile (move every other time), transitional mobility (move 2 or 3 times such as from elementary school to middle school from middle school to high school) and never mobile (sometimes we throw in one move in the middle just for the fun of it). We always have extras of the highly mobile population so that if more show up than expected, they have a color to participate with. Students usually do not choose the families into which they are born/live, participants will not either – so colors are assigned randomly.

Dividing by color coding can happen in a variety of ways: name tag of different colors – stickers, colored paper, colored dots, or folders of different colors. (We find that something like a name tag with a sticker or a colored dot on it works well, it needs to be something that they cannot hide or trade).

Dividing participants in to the color coded groups as they enter the meeting/room works best. This color coded system should be set up ahead of time and remain unexplained. Part of the power of this activity is the unknown part of the color – a simple explanation to not give it away is usually enough to satisfy the curious individual. We sometimes use four different types of name tags (and tell them we forgot to get enough of one kind so we have four different kinds or put four different stickers or colored dots on the nametags to “brighten them up”). They catch on quickly once you start announcing who has to move later on.

Decide what kind of activity you will be doing while the mobility shuffle is going on. No matter what you do for this activity it is intended to be more of a distraction than a need to share “real information”. We call this the distraction activity. We have shown a PowerPoint of data, or had the groups divided into brainstorming groups that had a question they needed to brainstorm and then put together a presentation or be ready to share out. We always try to have the information from the activity on a handout or we make sure to share out the information from the brainstorming so all can hear what was brainstormed, but the activity needs to feel like a real activity, have a purpose, so that they pay attention or do the activity as best they can. Although the “distraction activity” will appear to the participants to be a legitimate activity, the actual focus is for them to experience some effects of mobility/interruption. Do not let the participants know until the end of this exercise that the primary focus was the experience of mobility itself. The reasoning behind not telling is to experience mobility as a child would. Children do not have control over their own mobility and thus do not know ahead of time that they are going to move.

Here are some brainstorming topics we have had participants work on during the distraction activity: Advantages and disadvantages of moving? How does mobility affect the classroom? What can you do to support kids moving in and out of your school? How can you support non mobile students when classmates move in and out?

### **ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:**

#### **This activity needs two leaders.**

One leader starts the “distraction activity” and leads it from beginning to end like a teacher/instructor would. If they are leading a brainstorming activity they are continually keeping the groups moving and asking questions. If it is a PowerPoint they are moving right through the PowerPoint, never stopping and waiting for quiet but moving right along the process. The “distraction activity” should not be interrupted or stopped at any point to allow the mobility shuffle time to catch up. It is important to not acknowledge the mobility shuffle. The instructors should pretend it is not even happening. It is important to talk over and keep going on the activity no matter what. This will become very frustrating for some participants. All you can do is ignore or apologize but do not change the activity.

The second leader is the timer/watcher. They keep the mobility shuffle moving and the different colors doing what they need to be doing. They tell participants to move, to quiet down, to keep listening and to follow directions. They keep the mobility time sheet record and take notes of how participants are responding to the shuffle, writing down things heard and actions of the different participants moving to help with the discussion later.

When you are ready to begin the Mobility Shuffle, provide instructions for the “distraction activity”. Let the group get settled and started in the activity (give a good 3 mins. or so). Once it appears the groups are fully engaged start the mobility shuffle. Ring the bell, noise maker, alarm (we use the alarm on our phones) and explain that anyone who has a blue dot/sticker/ whatever color code you are using must pick up all their belongings and move to another spot in the room. No other explanation should be given or offered. Allow for the first few moves a few extra seconds for the mobile folks to move. The first few times it is chaotic and noisy and you will want to let them settle before sounding the alarm again. Do not hesitate to remind them as they move to move quietly and quickly, learning is happening and they need to get back to it. We also have eyes on the dots that are supposed to be moving and remind them that they need to move because that is the direction given. Sometimes you have to be firm. Continue this for the next 12 or so minutes using the guide of the time sheet having different colors move at different times. Ring the alarm every minute – asking the colors to move according to the time chart. Make sure you do it long enough for frustration and agitation to seep in. If you end too early the full effect of how a student feels will not be felt. You need to go at least 10 moves!

This activity should last for 15/20 minutes once the first alarm sound has sounded. The 13 moves represent the 13 years of public schooling provided for most students (each minute represents one year of schooling K-12).

After the last alarm sound has finished let the alarm go off one more time but let folks know that they do not have to move and that they can return to a place in the room for discussion/processing.

Explain that the colored dots represent the mobility experienced by a child. Ask them to take a moment to stop and take notice of what they are feeling in their body. How did this activity affect them? How did it affect those around them? Wait for a few moments to let it sink in; then ask each color group how this activity was for them. How did the mobility affect them? Their own insights will be powerful.

Ask them to put themselves into the shoes of a young child/student who experiences this over and over again.

We ask participants not to share the details of this activity so that others who may show up at one of our trainings or classes can experience in the same way they did. Participants are welcome to share that they had a great experience and now understand more than they did before but not to share the name (Mobility Shuffle) or any details that would give it away to someone who had not yet experienced this activity.

**\*\*Another idea to incorporate:**

We have handed out to the participants notebooks and writing utensils that match the assumptions we make on the mobility status of our students. For example those who never move are given a very nice notebook and a gel pen, while the ones who move every time are given stapled together scrap paper and a broken half used pencil. We set up 4 different types of notebooks and writing utensils so each group of colors are given the same type of notebooks and writing utensils. We ask our participants to take notes during the activity with the items we gave them. If someone complains we will give them a new pencil or notebook but they really have to ask for them. The assumption is that students who are mobile are also low income and do not have the necessary items to allow them to be prepared to work. (Is there some discrimination at play here – stereotypes)? This adds another layer to the discussion about access to materials and items. Having to ask for things when you do not know where they are or asking for the needed items so you are prepared to begin your day learning.

### **Discussion Questions:**

- How did you feel during the experience?
  - How did it feel for each participant (both mobile and non mobile - for there will be feelings on both sides).
  - Who was able to finish the assignment and who wasn't? Why?
  - How do you think mobility may affect a child who is trying to learn?
  - How does mobility affect those who are not mobile?
  - Did you begin to anticipate moving? How did that affect your wanting to learn or share?
  - What about the assumption that all mobile children are low-income?
  - Did anyone stop moving who was supposed to move every time? Why?
  - Might mobile children feel the same?
  - Did anyone leave something behind? Did you go back and get it? Would mobile students be able to go back and get things?
  - What did you notice about the reforming of groups?
  - Did anyone start going back to the same places? Why? Relationships make a huge difference in the lives of our highly mobile students.
  - When you had to move were you greeted by someone at the new space? Did or would it make a difference?
  - Did anyone help you? Make space? Pick something up? Understand what is going on? Answer a question?
  - If you never moved – what strategies did you use to pay attention? How did you treat those coming and going? Who became your friends?
  - What can we do to support mobile families and children?
  - What can we do to support children who are not mobile, but who are affected by mobility?
- Added notebooks and writing utensils:
- Did the notebooks and writing utensils affect the activity?
  - How did people compensate for having or not writing utensils?
  - What new thoughts do you have about mobile students?
  - What can we do to support mobile students and families?
  - Did you get angry?
  - What new thoughts do you have about being mobile?

- What range of emotions happened to you during this exercise? And you were never in any danger, knew you have a place to stay, and knew you will have a meal.....
- If your pencil was broken how ask for help or support for a new one?
- Was discrimination/stereotyping used in this exercise? Would the exercise be different without them?

This activity was developed by Jani Koester, Transition Education Program, Madison, WI 6-96

### Mobility Shuffle Time Sheet

	Color	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Highly mobile														
Semi mobile														
Natural mobility														
Never mobile														

- Give 1.5/2 mins between the first 2-3 moves after that move to 1 min between moves.
- Keeps the group moving – notice who is and isn't moving –tell them to move
- Remind them to move quietly without bothering anyone else's learning,
- Make comments about taking notes with the materials given
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Observations: