



# Athletics

Ways to make CYO Athletics Cross Country FUN for the participants and/or their families:

## Games

- **Sharks and Minnows:** Pick a number of runners to be “sharks.” This would depend on the number of runners you have on your team. Define a perimeter and sides for a running area. Gather the “sharks” in the middle of the running area and have the rest of the runners stand on one side of the running area. The object of the game is for the “minnows” to get across the running area without getting caught by the sharks. If a minnow is caught, then it becomes a shark. The last one to get caught is the winner!
- **Capture the Flag**
- **Adaptations of childhood games:**
  - **Long Distance Red Light/Green Light**
  - **Long Distance “Duck, Duck, Goose”** – create a really big circle (older kids run 2 or 3 times around the circle, younger kids only once)

## Cross Training

- **Fitness course** – with rope ladder, jump rope, etc.
- **Plyometrics** – especially for older grades

## Competitions

- **Plank contests** – see link for information regarding this exercise to develop core strength and stability: <http://sportsmedicine.about.com/od/abdominalcorestrength1/qt/plank.htm>
  - Simple contest of length of time, who can hold position the longest with correct form?
  - Modify the type of plank to increase the challenge
- **Interval Relays**
- **Hill sprints with prizes**
- **Scavenger hunts**
  - Photo Scavenger Hunt
    - Divide runners into groups (with coach as supervisor) and provide each with disposable camera
    - Each group gets a list of things to take photos of – develop a point system for different items to see and places to visit
    - Each photo must have team members in pictures with items they ran to
    - Extra exposures are for their own creative photos
    - Develop film and share with slideshow at the end of the season
  - Ecology Scavenger Hunt
    - Develop a list of items that might be found as litter in a park, on a beach, on parish or school grounds
    - Divide runners into groups (with coach as supervisor) and give runners latex gloves and bags for containing items

- Develop a point system that accounts for volume and/or unique items
- Discuss stewardship and Care of God's Creation
- **Field trips to fun, cool, picturesque places to run**
  - Ensure appropriate field trip procedures and permissions are followed if taking runners from parish/school offsite. This ensures appropriate supervision and safety
  - Can also provide opportunity as family run with a potluck picnic to follow so that families meet at the location
  - Discovery Park, Lincoln Park, Arboretum (incl. Foster Island),