

The Last Straw!

A Board Game on the Social Determinants of Health

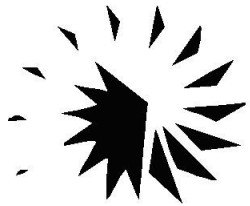
Game Master Training Presentation

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Agenda

- Importance of Game Master Training
- How to play the game
- Key discussion issues
- Game Master tricks



Basics of the Game

- Take on character
 - Vitality chips based on profile
- Move through life stages
 - Childhood, adolescence, adulthood, old age
 - Individual scenarios, community cards, profile updates
- Gain and lose chips based on profile
- Players die when out of chips
- Winner is player who reaches end with most chips
- Discussion throughout



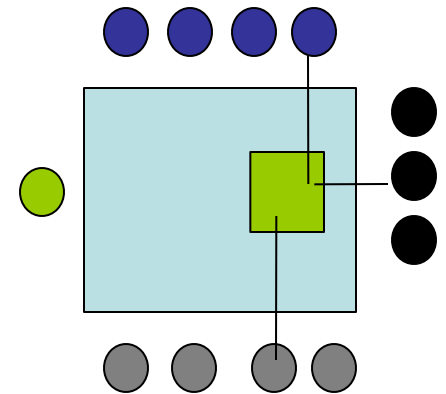
Setting up

- Place cards on the board
 - Childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age
 - Disability (Game Master keeps these)
- Count 3 piles of 10 chips each for each character
 - This will speed up profile building



Making Teams

- Make 3-4 teams of 3-4 players each
 - 3 teams if chatty group and Game Master feels comfortable leading discussion about social determinants
 - 4 teams if less chatty
- Each team will play one character
- Assign roles: board, bank, profile
- Good seating is critical
 - Teams should sit together
 - One player from each team should reach the board
 - Make it work for the space you have
 - Switch places midway if needed



Building the Profile

- Each team rolls for gender, race & SES
- **Ensure variety among teams**
 - **SES 1-2, 3-4, and 5-6**
- For race, ask them to pick an ethnic background (Polish, Jamaican, Jewish...)
- Give chips to each team (17-32)
- Give teams a minute to brainstorm a name
- Have teams introduce their character to the group (name, gender, race, SES & chips)
- Refer to that team by the character's name

CHIPS	
Gender	
Male	10
Female	8
Race	
White	10
Person of colour	7
SES	
SES x 2	2-12



Examples of Profiles

Diana

- Female
- White
- Portuguese
- SES 1
- Chips: 20

Peter

- Male
- White
- Scottish
- SES 3
- Chips: 26

Anil

- Male
- Person of colour
- South Asian
- SES 5
- Chips: 27



Moving through the Board

- Highest SES goes first
- Roll to move through scenarios
- Game Master reads scenarios from game book or player reads from Community Cards
- Players gain or lose chips based on profiles
- Example



Land on 17: After-school programs!

SES 1-2: Your community offers nothing to do when school is out. You spend a lot of time watching TV or hanging out in a nearby parking lot. Lose 1

SES 3-4: Your community provides a few programs for kids during the summer and some after-school activities. You participate occasionally. Remain the same

SES 5-6: Soccer, gymnastics, basketball, swimming, dance, drama, art classes - you are so active, you hardly have time to do homework! Gain 1.



Experiencing Square 17

Diana

- Female
- White
- Portuguese
- SES 1
- Chips: 20
- Lose 1

Peter

- Male
- White
- Scottish
- SES 3
- Chips: 26
- Remain the same

Anil

- Male
- Person of colour
- South Asian
- SES 5
- Chips: 27
- Gain 1



Community Cards

- Community Cards apply to all players
- Some are the same as individual scenarios
- Some ask players to brainstorm interventions
- If a player is going to lose all their chips due to a community card, players can join together to donate chips or stage an intervention
- Example



Childhood Community Card

- Global Climate Change

High levels of pollution are leading to global climate change. As a result, weather is more severe and causes property damage and social disruption. Poor people tend to suffer the most with less access to resources.

If the group can name, in the next 30 seconds, at least three possible interventions to reduce global warming, all gain 1. If not, all lose



Adolescence Community Card

- Subsidized Housing

Clean, safe housing is vital to health and overall well-being. Your community does not fund subsidized housing. People with low incomes are at risk of becoming homeless.

SES 1-2: lose 2

SES 3-6: lose 1



Profile Updates

- Update profile between ages
 - E.g. Between Adolescence and Adulthood, education level is determined
- After completing the update, have players recap what happened to their character during that age, including how many chips they now have



Profile Update Items

At Birth	Childhood to Adolescence	Adolescence to Adulthood	Adulthood to Old Age
SES Race Gender	Nutrition Activity Smoking Sexual Orientation	Activity/Nutrition Smoking Education SES	Activity/Nutrition Pension



Facilitation Tricks

- Make it fun!
- Keep track of time
 - Take additional chips away, if necessary
 - At a profile update, remove 10 chips from SES 1, but only 2 chips from SES 6
 - Have players roll with 2 dice for a while
- Keep track of characters' lives
 - Link to previous events to make it more realistic
- Keep it chatty
 - Raise interesting topics as they come up
- Keep one character alive until the end



Discussion topics

- Why are some individual scenarios repeated as community scenarios?
- Why do women live longer than men but start with fewer chips?
- Why is disability portrayed as only a drain on health?
 - When might disability enhance health?
 - What about disabilities that are episodic?
- Why are there so few scenarios linking race and health?
- Did the chips seem like money at any point?
 - Is that an accurate reflection of what health is?
- Does this game use evidence?
 - What kind of evidence exists?



Critical Issues

- Safety
 - Make participants feel safe taking on roles that may involve difficult issues or issues from their own lives
 - Bullying, abuse, poverty, disability, etc
- The -isms: Pay attention to participants' comments when they have chips taken away; ensure that they understand the cause of the negative health outcome
 - It is not being gay that is 'bad' for health; it is homophobia.
 - It is not being a person of colour; is racism.



Debriefing Topics

- What factors influenced your character's health?
 - Gaining and losing chips?
 - Cause of death?
- What other factors might influence health?
 - Literacy, immigration status, English-speaking, etc
- What is realistic or not about the game?
 - Can health really be quantified as chips?
- What might this game look like in a rural setting or a developing country?



Feedback

- We'd love to hear about your experiences!
- Email us at info@thelaststraw.ca
- Visit www.thelaststraw.ca to fill out an online survey.

