

# you laugh, you lose



**45 mins**



**intellectual**



**social**



**emotional**

This program will have everyone laughing! Residents, staff and guests volunteer to tell jokes and try to make each other laugh. Corny jokes. Bad jokes. Dad jokes. The worse the better!

## 1 share the health benefits of laughter

The positive health benefits of laughter, especially for seniors' health, are widely accepted. This is what the doctors tell us.

- Laughing increases the body's endorphin levels. Endorphins are natural pain killers.
- It lowers blood pressure and cholesterol by increasing blood oxygenation and circulation.
- Reduce stress, depression and anxiety by increasing levels of dopamine and other brain chemicals.
- Workout the diaphragm and abdominal muscles which is especially important for asthma, bronchitis or other respiratory ailments.
- Laughter enhances immunity.

### laughter and heart disease

WebMD reports that healthy people are "more likely to laugh often and to use humor to get out of uncomfortable situations. Those with heart disease, on the other hand, were 40% less likely to laugh in those situations."

So, although the exact relationship between laughter and disease and pain is complex, doctors do know there is a connection. Laughing is good for everyone, especially seniors who have greater risks of pain, depression, heart disease, and weakened immunity than the rest of the population.

*Print out this information from Appendix A and discuss with residents before or after starting the game.*

## 2 play you laugh, you lose

The rules are simple, but there are two ways to play. Both ways start with two people who challenge each other to a joke-off. Have two people sit or stand opposite each other. Start exchanging jokes with each other, the lamer the better!

### The options are:

**first fail:** The first person to laugh, loses. Then they are replaced with another person from the group, and play continues. This works well as a “show” where one pair of jokesters entertain the entire audience. Remember to keep score!

**point pileup:** Each time a person laughs they get a point until they reach a predetermined number of points, or an amount of time passes. This works well in pairs or small groups. A final run-off using the First Fail rules can determine a final winner if not everybody is just joking around!

Have participants tell jokes to each other (and any audience) to make them laugh. Or consider using [funny internet videos](#) to make everyone laugh! Here are some [jokes from Reader’s Digest](#) to print out. And here’s the [99 funniest Dad Jokes](#) ever! Encourage residents, guests and staff to tell their own all-time favorites, too.

To top off the group activity, give everyone a copy of the corny jokes crossword puzzle. Complete it in small groups, pairs or individually. No matter what, it’s good for a laugh, too!

## 3 play corny crossword game

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*continued on next page*

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