Kick the Stick

Category	Game
Type	Relay game
Time to allocate (mins)	5
Instructions	Game playing is a pastime enjoyed by most people. Native Americans are no exception. The origins of many games were with the tribal gods. Because of this, games were played ceremonially to bring rain, ensure good harvests, cure illness, expel evil spirits, or give pleasure to the gods by demonstrating physical fitness. Though games are usually played for fun and pleasure, Native American games also played a role in the education of children by helping them develop skills necessary to be successful adults. KICKING THE STICK Pueblo (Southwest) 2 teams of even numbers, usually boys Equipment: 2 sticks, four inches long and one inch in diameter. Play: Select 2 leaders who then choose sides. The players stand in parallel lines behind their leaders. A line is drawn in front of the leaders and place the sticks on this line, one in front of each team. At a given signal, the leaders run forward and kick the sticks as hard as they can, each one taking the stick in front of his team. The rest of the players follow, getting into the race by taking their turn at kicking the stick whenever they get a chance. The players must not pick up the stick at any time. They must kick them out of any brush or hole that they may get into. Before the race a goal must be decided upon, at which place the players are to turn homeward. The players must all pass this goal before they turn about and go in the other direction. If they fail to pass it, they cannot kick the stick again. The first team to kick its stick back to the starting place is winner. In the early days, the young men were required to run for many miles every morning to enable them to become fast runners and strong at bearing heat and cold. Kicking the stick is one of the games they used for training. Adults usually ran for several miles out of the village before they started homeward

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