

Icebreakers

Icebreakers are activities designed for a group with the purpose of introducing youth members to one another. They are great for new recruits, camps (when youth members may not know one another), or any other time when you feel that youth members should know more about one another.

It is important to remember that some youth members may find it quite threatening when introducing themselves so it is important to have a “nonthreatening environment”. This basically means that everyone is welcomed into the group, there is no ridiculing, and although we wish our members to step out of their comfort zone, this should be saved for later activities.

In large groups such as camps, it is a good idea to have smaller groups first, and then moving to activities that involve a larger group.

Included Icebreaker Games

- The Game's in the Name
- Name Banga
- People Bingo
- Rare Birds
- Confusing Juggle
- Bumpety-Bump-Bump
- Welcome to the Party
- Britney Spears on Tour

The Game's in the Name

Submitted by: Paul O'Connell

Equipment:

- None

Directions:

- Make a circle and begin the game by introducing yourself in a set pattern (eg: "Most people know me as Dan, but I'm really Dancing Dan because that's what I love to do!")
- Go around the circle and each person says their first name, followed by either a word that rhymes with their name, has the same starting letter, or describes them. (ie: Fancy Nancy, Saxophone Sam, Gentile Jill). After each introduction, the next person is challenged to repeat the nicknames of those who have already been introduced.
- At the end challenge a few volunteers to repeat the whole group.

Name Banga

Submitted by: Shanelle Johnston

Equipment:

- 2 aqua sticks (pool noodles) or something similar

Directions:

- Start off with a brief introduction of themselves utilising another icebreaker. Once everyone has been introduced, form them up in a large circle. Place two bases and a foam stick on each in the middle of the circle. One player stands in the middle with a foam stick, and the rest of the players cross their legs.
- The player in the middle calls out a person's name as they gently hit that person's knees. The person called then has to get up and grab the other foam stick and hit the caller (between shoulders to knees) before the caller places the foam stick back on its base and steals the other person's seat.
- If the caller is hit before they can steal the seat, they remain the caller. If the caller succeeds, the player who was called becomes the new caller.

People Bingo

Submitted by: Paul O'Connell

Equipment:

- Pencil and bingo sheet for each player.
Create your own Bingo sheet with experiences and unique qualities instead of numbers. For example: "plays a musical instrument, was born in a different city, has won a contest, can sing Mary has a Little Lamb, etc."

Directions:

- Pass out the People Bingo sheets. Tell players to find people in the group who match the descriptions in the squares and have them sign the squares.
- The first person with five different signatures in a horizontal, vertical, or diagonal line shouts "Bingo!" The only rule is that people can sign someone's bingo sheet only once.
- Let the group mingle. When someone has a Bingo, they call out the names of the people who match up with their Bingo squares.
- Keep playing until there are several winners.

Rare Birds

Submitted by: Paul O'Connell

Equipment:

- Pencil and a strip of paper for each player.

Directions:

- Explain that each of us in our own unique way is a rare bird. In the fact that we each have unusual qualities experiences, likes, etc. that make up who we are. In this activity each player shares one of these, and then the group tries to determine just which rare bird description belongs to whom.
- Pass out materials. Ask players to each write their names on the strip of paper as well as something unusual, interesting, or just plain funny about themselves that most people in the group don't know. Be sure to write one yourself.
- Collect the strips of paper. Then, without giving away the writers identities, read them aloud, stopping after each one to let players guess who wrote it. After a few minutes, invite the real 'rare bird' to please stand up!

Confusing Jungle

Submitted by: Paul O'Connell

Equipment:

- Koosh ball or something similar.

Directions:

- This is for a group of 10-15.
- In a circle with one hand of every player touching their eyebrow, call out someone's name, and pass the koosh to the player. They put their hand down, thank the thrower, and then pass it to someone else who has their hand in the air.
- This is repeated until everyone has passed and received the ball. The final pass ends up with the starter. (Hands on eyebrows so that no one gets named twice.)
- Throw the koosh around in the same sequence, using names.
- Once this has been completed a few times, introduce a second ball, then a third. See how many balls can be kept going non-stop in sequence.

Variations:

- For a real sinister challenge, have two different coloured balls. Use the same process, except the red ball has a different path than the blue ball.

Bumpety-Bump-Bump

Submitted by: Paul O'Connell

Equipment:

- None

Directions:

- Have everyone standing in a circle, with a 'volunteer' in the middle.
- The volunteer has to point to a person and say either:
"Left bumpety-bump-bump", or "Right bumpety-bump-bump".
- The person who is pointed at must say the name of the person on which side the player in the middle said before the player in the middle finishes "bumpety-bump-bump".
- If the pointed player says the name before "bumpety-bump-bump", the person in the middle stays there and has another go.
- If the person in the middle finishes "bumpety-bump-bump" before the player says the name, they swap positions and roles.

Welcome to the Party!

Submitted by: Emma Faulding

Equipment:

- None

Directions:

- Tell the players that they are at a party and that they are the only one who knows everyone else. Their job is to introduce everyone.
They don't introduce themselves, but each of the players goes up to someone and says:
"Hi, what's your name?" (Dave)
"Hi Dave, come on in I'd like you to meet somebody... Hi, what's your name?" (Bill)
"Hi Bill, this is Dave. Dave, this is Bill"
- Each time this is done, make sure that the players really get into it with smiling, handshakes, etc.

Britney Spears on Tour

Submitted by: Shanelle Johnston

Equipment:

- None

Directions:

- Have everyone in a circle, and on the count of three, have everyone sing their name as loudly as possible.
- Let the players go off and tell them to develop a movement to add to their name (ie: hand waves, jumping in the air, rolling eyes, tapping hands, feet, twirls, etc.)
- Give them a minute to practise, and go around the circle showing their movements and get synchronised.
- Move rapidly around the circle, having players singing their name with movement, one after another.