



Ice Breakers



Mt. Calvary Confirmation

What is an “ice-breaker”?

- Popular expression “break the ice” when in a unfamiliar group setting
- Brief activity that is facilitated by a leader and requires group participation
- Fun!

Why do we do “ice-breakers”?

- To break the ice
- To build relationships within a small/large group
- To create a welcoming group dynamic
- To have fun
- To make use of extra time
- To relieve tension
- To release nervous or misdirected energy
- To transition to a new topic or activity
- To establish a routine within the group

How to facilitate an “ice-breaker”...

Introduce: what are you doing and why

Complete: jump in and do the activity

Debrief: Discuss the Who, What, When, Where, Why, How

Debriefing ideas...

- How did you feel before, during, and after?
- What did you notice about yourself?
- Who surprised you the most?
- How did it feel to share that about yourself?
- What did you notice about the group members?
- What is one word to describe how you feel right now?
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Considerations...

- “Right to pass”
 - Talking pieces (stuffed animal, bouncy ball, play-doh, silly puddy)
 - Surface or deep
 - Debrief during OR after
 - Match or mismatch with the theme of the lesson
 - Be aware of your physical space
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If you could...

Go around the circle and have kids answer a question

- If you could be an animal, what would you be and why?
- If you could be an ice cream flavor, what would you be and why?
- If you could visit anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?

Candy/Toilet Paper...

Place a bowl of candy or a roll of toilet paper in the middle of the table and instruct group members that they are allowed to take as many pieces as they need (tip: you can also limit the group to 1-5 pieces each, if needed). Pass the bowl or roll around for each person to take what they want.

When everyone is ready, go around the circle and ask each person to tell something about themselves for each piece/square that they took. You can designate specific things to say (i.e., things about your family, your favorite things, your talents, things about school or church) or let group members decide what they would like to say.

Eat candy or throw toilet paper away at the end.

****Variation:** for candy, assign a specific topic to the color of the candy (i.e., orange = school, red = family, yellow = sports/hobbies)

Adjectives...

Ask each group member to pick a word that starts with the same sound as their first name (i.e., Jazzy Jenny or Goofy George). The leader says the word s/he picked and then their own name. Then, the person sitting on the leader's left says the leader's adjective/name and then their own adjective/name. The next person says the first two adjectives/names and then adds his/her own. Eventually, the last person has to remember the adjectives and names of the whole group.

Toss and Tell Beach Ball...

Everyone stands in a circle. The leader begins by tossing the ball to another person in the circle. The person who catches the ball answers the question that is closest to where their right thumb landed on the ball. Then, they throw to the next person. Continue until every member of the group has had a turn.

Uniquely You...

Ask group members to think of an experience or quality/talent/aspect that they think will be unique to them. Then, ask one group member to share their unique item to see if it is truly unique to them or if someone else has that in common. If someone else in the group can relate to what the person says, then it is not unique and the person continues until they find something truly unique. When each person finds something unique, they sit down. The activity continues until everyone is sitting down. (i.e., I can lick my elbow)

Follow the Leader...

One player leaves the group and stands where s/he cannot see the group. While the player is away, the group selects a leader who does a movement (i.e., tapping his/her toe, clapping, patting knees, sticking out tongue, nodding head) and the others follow. The group invite the player back into the circle. The leader continues to change the movement and the player has 3 guesses to identify the leader.

Linked...

In a small group, one person is chosen to begin the activity. The first person stands at the front of the room and puts one of his/her hands on his/her hips so that the arm can be linked with another person. The first person shares something about themselves—something really unique or really common, doesn't matter. The group members listen and if they can say that about themselves, they run to the leader and try to link with the arm that is available. Whoever links first (it's a race!) is the next person. The sharing continues until the last person links to the line. Then, the challenge is to find something in common between the first and last person so that the line forms a linked circle.

Highs & Lows...

Go around the circle and ask group members to share a high (positive thing) and a low (negative thing) that has happened in the past week.

2 Truths and a Lie...

Each group member thinks of 2 truths and 1 lie about themselves. When everyone is ready, go around the circle and have each group member share their truths/lie. As the group listens, they try to guess which item is a lie.

Sparkle...

The goal of this game is to count to 10 and then say "sparkle". Standing in a circle, one person starts counting. Group members can say one or two numbers at a time (i.e., "1" or "1,2", "7" or "5, 6"). The count goes: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-Sparkle. The person standing next to the person who says "sparkle" sits down. Continue around the circle until one person is standing.

Barometer...

This is a scaling activity. Ask the group members to rate their ____ (mood, energy, emotions, week, day, etc.) on a scale from 1-10. Tell the group that 1 means "really bad" and 10 means "really good". Go around the circle and share. Ask follow-up questions like...

"How can we improve your rating?"

"What does a 5 look like?"

"Who can help you keep things at a 10?"

Frogger...

The group sits in a circle and one person is chosen as the detective. The detective leaves the room while the group chooses the "frogger". The group invites the detective to return and the frogger tries to "kill" people (or, "put people to sleep") by sticking out his/her tongue. If a group member sees the frogger stick his/her tongue out, the group member makes a dramatic exit and lays down. The detective has 3 tries to guess the frogger.

Human Knot...

In a circle, each group member puts their right arm into the middle and grabs the hand of someone else. Then, they put their left arms in a grab someone else's hand. They cannot grab hands with the person next to them nor can they grab hands with the same person for their left and right arms. Once everyone is holding 2 hands, the group is challenged to untangle back into a clean circle.