Ice Breaker Booklet

*In this booklet, you will find activities which you need little to no preparation and supplies. These activities can be used as ice breakers during Friday night for your small group to become more comfortable with each other. It can also be used if you find yourself having extra time on your hands in one of the small groups.*

2 Truths, 1 Lie: In this game, everyone must think up 3 things about themselves. Two are true and one is a fib. It doesn’t matter what order you tell these 3 things in, as long as 2 of the are true and 1 is a lie. The group then will try to figure out which one is the lie. This is a really great, get to know you game.

Active Name Game: Gather the group in a circle. Go around the circle and say, “My name \_\_\_\_\_\_” I would say Kickin’ Kelsey and my action would be to kick. Each of them has to come up with an alliterative action that goes along with their name. Once one person says it, the group then repeats the action and says the name.

Back to back: Have the youth gather in pairs sit back to back. Once they’re all sitting with a partner, have them link arms and try to stand-up without breaking the link.

Communication Challenge: Give everyone a number. They have to arrange themselves in numerical order by communicating with each other without speaking or holding up fingers. They make up their own sub-language or sign-language and it often is pretty amusing. For Round Two, have people arrange themselves in order of birth or in calendar months (like the game, Mute Organization).

Electricity: One of my favorite games with middle and high schoolers! You start by getting everyone in a circle around a flat surface so either a table or the floor. Everyone should put both hands in front of them. Now, have everyone pick-up and move their left hand, to the left, left of the person next to the, their right hand. Each person should have the person to their right’s, left hand and their left neighbor’s right hand in between your own hands. (There should be 2 hands between your two hands). Now, to start the electricity goes clockwise. So to make the electricity go, you must tap/slap your hand down once to make the electricity move. If you hit it twice, it reverses the electricity. Practice going around the circle a few times with just the taps. Once they have that down, you can add in a fist tap and a fist tap skips the next person in the electricity pattern. The object is to go quickly, keeping up the pace without skipping a beat in tapping your hand.

Evolution Rock, Paper, Scissors: Rock paper scissors but a little… more! So you can go through stages when you win or lose. You start out as an egg and eggs crouch over and make themselves as small as possible. Then you can move up to a chicken which you can cluck and make chicken wings. The next stage is a dinosaur in which you are a t-rex with little arms! The last stage is a pterodactyl and you screech and flap your arms with big wings. When you win, you move to the next stage and when you lose, you go back to an egg. Play this for 2-5 minutes.

Graveyard: Ask for 1 or 2 people out of your group to be “it”. The rest of the youth lay with their backs on the ground (faces up). Graveyard is where everyone tries to be stone and the people that are “it” have to try and make ground-layers laugh! “It” people cannot touch a person laying down and the person laying down cannot shut their eyes. Once a person laughs, they also become it. The goal is to try and get everyone laughing!

The Great Gumshoe: Have kids mix up their shoes in a a pile at one end of the room. Form teams of four or more at the opposite end of the room. The first person on each team is the detective. The second person on each team describes his/her shoes to the detective, who runs to find them in the pile and bring them back. If the detective brings back the wrong shoe he gathers more clues and searches again. If the detective brings back the right shoes the owner puts them on and becomes the detective. Repeat the process until one team finds all its shoes. Initial detectives introduce his/her team to the rest of the class.

Human Knot: Get a group together anywhere between 5-16 people. If there are more than 16, divide into 2 groups. Ask the participants to form a circle, shoulder-to-shoulder. Each person should place their right hand in the middle and then grab another hand. Now their left hand goes in and they grab another hand (a different hand than the first hand they grabbed). As they grab each other’s hands, have them introduce themselves to each other. They may not let go of anyone’s hands for any reason until they have untangled themselves. They may change grip but are not to unclasp and re-clasp to undo the knot.

Human Machine: The youth are to make a human machine using all of their team members. They can choose a machine of any kind. Once their machine is chosen, they have to act it out with your whole team. Ex: Electric toothbrush is the machine. So some youth would lay down to be the handle, others would be the bristles and you could even have one be the toothpaste! The sky’s the limit!

Larry, Curly, Mo: Groups of 20-30 sit or stand in a circle. One person is in the middle and points to someone in the circle and says either “Curly,” “Mo,” or “Larry”. The person pointed to must respond with a name before the person in the middle can count out loud to ten.  The name the person shouts depends on the name the person in the middle says:

“Curly”: say the name of the person on your right.
“Moe”: say your own name.
“Larry”: say the name of the person on your left.

If they succeed, the person in the middle stays and repeats the process with someone else in the circle. If they fail, they change places with the person in the middle. After a while, you may want to add a second person to the middle. After five minutes, rotate half of each group to another group, or combine two groups and put a second person in the middle.

Laughing Game: The objective of this game is to get everyone to laugh while you cannot laugh yourself. Have everyone sit in a circle facing each other. When it is someone’s turn, they have to say or act something out to get everyone else to laugh. If you laugh, then you are out until the next round. Last person to not laugh wins the game. This game is as fun as you make it, so if you do not have a youth group that is very outgoing, then this game will be a lot of fun.

Look-up, Look-down: Gather the kids in a circle, shoulder to shoulder. The leader will call out, look down and they’ll all look down at someone’s shoes. Then the leader will call out, look up and the youth will look at someone else in the circle, into their eyes. If two people are looking at each other, they are out. The circle gets smaller until 2 or 1 are left. The last person(s) standing are the winner(s). To make it more extreme, those who look at each other have to scream and whoever screams first stays in. If it’s a tie, you can tree off. A tree off is where those who want the win will stand like a tree, on one foot with arms out like limbs. Whoever falls first, loses the tree off.

Ninja: Ninja is an excellent game! Explain the rules first: when you say ninja, from a small, shoulder to shoulder circle the kids jump back into any ninja pose. Then, going clockwise, every person gets one move to try and get someone else out. You get someone else out by touching their hands from the wrist up. Anything else is not fair game. The person you are attacking has one move to defend themselves and their hands. You don’t have to move in an offensive move, you can move into a more comfortable position if need be but all moves have to be one swift motion and you have to stay in your ending motion until your defensive move or your next turn. You can play a long game where each hand is fair game and if you hit one, that hand goes behind your back but the other one is still in OR you can play a fast game where if you hit one hand, the person is out. Get your kids in a circle, shoulder to shoulder and play the game!

Psychologist: Pick one person to go out of the room and out of hearing range. The rest of the group picks a quirk that the whole group has like saying yes to all questions that end with a vowel or don’t make eye contact. It can be as silly or simple as you want it to be but it has to be something the whole group can do. Once you’ve decided, call back the person that left. The person that left is now the psychologist and they have to figure out what is wrong with the group!

Trainwreck: Have all the participants grab a chair and put them in a circle around you (with enough room to run in the circle). There will always be one less chair than there are people. Whomever gets stuck in the middle says their name and then says something they like such as ice cream. Then, if the chair sitters also like that, they have to get up and find a new chair. The middle person now gets to try and find a seat. If you can’t think of anything to say, you can say Trainwreck in which EVERYONE has to get up and find a new seat! You have to move at least 2 seats to your right or left. It’s a fun game to get to know everyone!

Wink: If your group likes to play games, this can get everyone involved and is a lot of fun. To start, have all the teens all sit in a large circle. Ask them all to close their eyes and walk around the circle. Tap a kid on the head (one kid) to be the winker. Have the kids open their eyes and stare at one another. The kids must make eye contact. The killer winks at different members. When the member sees the wink, she should fall over dramatically. The louder and sillier the fall, the funnier this game is. Allow students to gasp, fall out of their chairs onto the floor and be completely goofy. The goal is for those still up to figure out who the winker is before he winks at them.