

Two Truths and a Lie

Ask everyone to write on a piece of paper THREE things about themselves which may not be known to the others in the group. Two are true and one is not. Taking turns they read out the three 'facts' about themselves and the rest of the group votes which are true and false.

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Candy Introductions

Pass around the a bag of small candies (M&Ms, Skittles) and tell each participant to choose anywhere from 1 to 5 pieces of anything that they want. Instruct them not to eat it yet, though. After they have chosen their candy, you will tell them what each candy type/color represents. If there is a whiteboard present, write on the board the following:

- Red – Favorite hobbies
- Green – Favorite place on earth
- Blue – Favorite memory
- Yellow -Dream job
- Orange – Wildcard (tell us anything about yourself!)

If you don't have the above colors, change the above to match the candy types that you have. Each person takes turns introducing himself or herself, beginning with their name and then saying one fact for each candy type that they have.

<http://www.icebreakers.ws/get-to-know-you/candy-introductions.html>

Interview

Divide the young people into pairs. Ask them to take three minutes to interview each other. Each interviewer has to find 3 interesting facts about their partner. Bring everyone back to together and ask everyone to present the 3 facts about their partner to the rest of the group.

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My name is?

Go around the group and ask each young person to state his/her name and attach an adjective that not only describes a dominant characteristic, but also starts with the same letter of his name e.g. generous Grahame, dynamic Dave. Write them down and refer to them by this for the rest of the evening.

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TP Surprise

The teacher will welcome students at the door holding a roll of toilet paper. Students can take however many sheets they want and the teacher will explain what it is for when everyone grabs some. When class begins the students will have to write one interesting thing about themselves per sheet of toilet paper. When they are finished they introduce themselves to the class per sheet of toilet paper.

<http://www.cedu.niu.edu/~shumow/itt/Icebreakers.pdf>

The question web

You need to have a spool of string or wool for this game. Ask the young people to stand in a circle. Hold on to the end of the string and throw the ball/spool to one of the young people to catch. They then choose a question from 1-20 to answer. A list of 20 sample questions is given below. Adapt for your group. Holding the string they then throw it to another member of the group. Eventually this creates a web as well as learning some interesting things about each other! At the end of the game you could comment that we all played a part in creating this unique web and if one person was gone it would look different. In the same way it's important that we all take part to make the group what it is, unique and special.

1. If you had a time machine that would work only once, what point in the future or in history would you visit?
2. If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?
3. If your house was burning down, what three objects would you try and save?
4. If you could talk to any one person now living, who would it be and why?
5. If you HAD to give up one of your senses (hearing, seeing, feeling, smelling, tasting) which would it be and why?
6. If you were an animal, what would you be and why?
7. Do you have a pet? If not, what sort of pet would you like?
8. Name a gift you will never forget?
9. Name one thing you really like about yourself.
10. What's your favorite thing to do in the summer?

1. If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?
2. If I gave you \$10,000, what would you spend it on?
3. If you could watch your favourite movie now, what would it be?
4. If you could talk to anyone in the world, who would it be?
5. If you could wish one thing to come true this year, what would it be?
6. If you could live in any period of history, when would it be?
7. If you could change anything about yourself, what would you change?
8. If you could be someone else, who would you be?
9. If you could have any question answered, what would it be?
10. If you could watch your favorite TV show now, what would it be?
11. If you could have any kind of pet, what would you have?
12. If you could do your dream job 10 years from now, what would it be?
13. If you had to be allergic to something, what would it be?
14. If you sat down next to Jesus on a bus, what would you talk about?
15. If money and time was no object, what would you be doing right now?
16. If you had one day to live over again, what day would you pick?
17. If you could eat your favorite food now, what would it be?
18. If you could learn any skill, what would it be?
19. If you were sent to live on a space station for three months and only allowed to bring three personal items with you, what would they be?
20. If you could buy a car right now, what would you buy?

Conversations

Each person is given a sheet of paper with a series of instructions to follow. This is a good mixing game and conversation starter as each person must speak to everyone else. For example;

- Find out who has traveled the farthest
- Who has the most unusual hobby?
- Find the weirdest thing anyone has eaten.
- Who has had the most embarrassing experience?

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Name that person

Divide into two teams. Give each person a blank piece of card. Ask them to write five little known facts about themselves on their card. Include all leaders in this game too. For example, I have a pet iguana, I was born in Iceland, my favourite food is spinach, my grandmother is called Doris and my favorite colour is vermillion. Collect the cards into two team piles. Draw one card from the opposing team pile. Each team tries to name the person in as few clues as possible. Five points if they get it on the first clue, then 4, 3, 2, 1, 0. The team with the most points wins. (Note: if you select the most obscure facts first, it will increase the level of competition and general head scratching!)

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Flags

Flags is a get-to-know-you activity, helping young people express what's important to them or more about themselves. Provide large sheets of paper, crayons, markers and paints. Ask each young person to draw a flag which contains some symbols or pictures describing who they are, what's important to them or what they enjoy. Each flag is divided into 4 or 6 segments. Each segment can contain a picture i.e. favourite emotion, favourite food, a hobby, a skill, where you were born, your family, your faith. Give everyone time to draw their flags. Ask some of the group to share their flags and explain the meaning of what they drew.

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Who did it?

Hand out a pen and paper to each person and ask them to write something exciting they have done in their lives - for example "I have been sky diving" or "I have been in hospital for a week" etc. Encourage people to think of something unique and interesting (though be prepared for some people to struggle to think of something!). Collect all the pieces of paper and read them out loud to the group. The group has to decide "who did it".

http://www.jubed.com/youth_ministry/view/Who-did-it/?s=9

People Bingo (handout in notebook)

Great for new groups. Make a 5 by 4 grid on a piece of card and duplicate for everyone in your group. Supply pens or pencils. Each box contains one of the statements below. Encourage the group to mix, talk to everyone to try and complete their card. If one of the items listed on the bingo card relates to the person they are talking with, have them sign their name in that box. End the activity after 10 minutes and review some of the interesting facts the group has discovered about each other. You can add your own statements appropriate for your group.

- Has brown eyes
- Has made the longest journey
- Has eaten the weirdest food
- Plays Tennis
- Is wearing blue
- Speaks a foreign language
- Plays a musical instrument
- Has 2 or more pets
- Has been to the most foreign countries
- Hates broccoli
- Has 2 or more siblings
- Name begins with an 'S'
- Loves Chinese food
- Loves to ski
- Loves soccer
- Likes to get up early
- Someone who's favorite TV show is CSI
- Someone over 6ft tall

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People Bingo

Has brown eyes	Is a night owl	Favorite TV show is the Voice	Hates broccoli	Has 2 brothers
Has traveled to Europe	Has milked a cow	Has 4 pets	Drives a black car	Likes to cook
Loves to ski	Is left-handed	FREE SPACE	Plays the piano	Has never flown before
Is a vegetarian	Went to the beach over the summer	Has bungee jumped	Is afraid of spiders	Speaks more than 2 languages
Is the oldest child in the family	Has touched a tarantula	Is a leaders in FCA	Likes to hike	Drinks coffee

Balloon Smash

Each person in your group will need 2 balloons (plus some spares for those that might break whilst you're inflating them). You can make this an individual game or team game (balloons should be two different colors if a team game). Tie two foot long strings to the ends of each balloon. Give each person two balloons (of the same color) and have them tie one to each leg. Separate the teams on either side of the room/area. When you say start, everyone tries to pop the balloons from the other team by stepping on them. When both balloons have popped, the person is out and must sit down. The team with the last balloon remaining wins.

http://www.jubed.com/youth_ministry/view/Balloon-Smash/?s=9

Would you rather..?

Questions may range from silly trivia to more serious content. On the way you might find out some interesting things about your young people! Place a line of tape down the centre of the room. Ask the group to straddle the tape. When asked 'Would you rather?' they have to jump to the left or right as indicated by the leader. Don't forget to encourage your adult helpers to join in too! I've included 20 starter questions, just add your own and let the fun begin.

Would you rather..?

- Visit the doctor or the dentist?
- Eat broccoli or carrots?
- Watch TV or listen to music?
- Own a lizard or a snake?
- Have a beach holiday or a mountain holiday?
- Be an apple or a banana?
- Be invisible or be able to read minds?
- Be hairy all over or completely bald?
- Be the most popular or the smartest person you know?
- Make headlines for saving somebody's life or winning a Nobel Prize?
- Go without television or fast food for the rest of your life?
- Have permanent diarrhoea or permanent constipation?
- Be handsome/beautiful and dumb or be ugly and really smart?
- Always be cold or always be hot?
- Not hear or not see?
- Eliminate hunger and disease or be able to bring lasting world peace?
- Be stranded on a deserted island alone or with someone you don't like?
- See the future or change the past?
- Be three inches taller or three inches shorter?
- Wrestle a lion or fight a shark?

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Bun shuffle

Arrange chairs in a big circle. Choose someone from the group to be 'it', and that person stands in the middle of the circle. Have the rest of the group sit on the chairs, and make sure you have one spare chair. The aim of the game is for people sitting down to prevent the person that is 'it' to take a seat. They do this by shuffling their 'buns' left or right to occupy the empty chair before the person who is 'it' can sit down. Players are only allowed to move left or right (ie. not run across the circle). Eventually once the person who is 'it' gets a seat, the person to their left or right (whoever was slowest) becomes 'it'.

http://www.jubed.com/youth_ministry/view/Bun-shuffle/?s=9

Drop the lid

Everyone is seated in a circle. One person stands in the middle of the circle, holding a lid. The person in the middle (with the lid) begins by walking around inside the circle. They then take the hand of someone of the opposite sex and lead them around. The second person then takes the hand of the opposite sex and so on. This continues until the person with the lid "drops the lid" and everyone runs to a seat. The person left without a seat picks up the lid and the game begins again.

http://www.jubed.com/youth_ministry/view/Drop-the-lid/?s=9

Blanket Volleyball

This game is just like normal volleyball, but each team is given a blanket. The team should stand around the edge of the blanket, stretching it out so it is tight. The 'serving' team should start by placing the ball on the blanket, loosening then brining it tight so it 'throws' the ball over the net. The other team then use their blanket to catch the ball then throw it back.

http://www.jubed.com/youth_ministry/view/Blanket-Volleyball/?s=9

Build a bridge

The idea of this game is simple - split your group into teams of 3 or 4, and give each team a "Building Kit" (popsicle sticks, putty, paper clips, string, glue, etc. - make sure each team has same amount of everything) and a bowl of water. Each group has a certain amount of time to build a bridge to span across a bowl of water. At the end of the time, each group has to demonstrate their bridge. You then test it for strength by adding pebbles one at a time, until the bridge collapses. The team with the strongest bridge wins!

http://www.jubed.com/youth_ministry/view/Build-a-bridge/?s=9

Around the world

The leader begins by saying the name of any country, city, river, ocean or mountain that can be found in an atlas. The young person next to him must then say another name that begins with the last letter of the word just given. Each person has a definite time limit (e.g. three seconds) and no names can be repeated. For example - First person: London, Second Person: Niagara Falls, Third Person: Switzerland

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Supermarket

The first player says: "I went to the supermarket to buy an Apple (or any other object you can buy in a supermarket that begins with an A). The next player repeats the sentence, including the "A" word and adds a "B" word. Each successive player recites the sentence with all the alphabet items, adding one of his own. For example; 'I went to the supermarket and bought an Apple, Banana, CD, dog food, envelopes, frozen fish'. It's not too hard to reach the end of the alphabet, usually with a little help! Watch out for 'Q' and 'X'

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Tall stories

The leader starts a story with a sentence that ends in SUDDENLY. The next person then has to add to the story with his own sentence that ends in SUDDENLY. Continue the story until everyone has contributed. The story becomes crazier as each young person adds their sentence. Tape it and play it back. For example; 'Yesterday I went to the zoo and was passing the elephant enclosure when SUDDENLY.....'

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Once upon a time

Ask each young person to think of either the name of a person, a place or a thing. Invite them to share this with the rest of the group. Select one of your group to begin a story. However, within 10 seconds they must mention the person, place or thing they have thought of. After 10 seconds (use a stopwatch or kitchen timer) the story is continued by the next person who must also mention their person, place or thing within the 10 seconds. Continue until everyone has made a contribution. The stories can get really weird, but that's part of the fun!

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Word link

This is a word association game. Ask the group to sit in a circle. The first person starts with any word they wish i.e. red. The next person repeats the first word and adds another word which links to the first i.e. tomato. The next person repeats the previous word and add another word link i.e. soup, and so on. To keep this moving, only allow five seconds for each word link.

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Object stories

Collect together a number of objects and place in a canvas bag. The objects can include everyday items i.e. a pencil, key-ring, mobile phone, but also include some more unusual ones i.e. a fossil, holiday photograph, wig! Pass the bag around the group and invite each young person to dip their hand into the bag (without looking) and pull out one of the objects.

The leader begins a story which includes his object. After 20 seconds, the next person takes up the story and adds another 20 seconds, incorporating the object they are holding. And so on, until everyone has made a contribution.

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Add words

Simple, completely ridiculous and a lot of fun. The first person says a word, for example 'The'. The second person says the first word and ADDS a second word of their choice, and so on. At the end you might have a complete sentence! For example, 'The aardvark spiralled into the puddle of custard clutching his skateboard while whistling his favourite Bjork melody.' The fun thing is putting twists in the sentence so that the others have a hard time coming up with a word that fits. ADD WORDS can be played a few times without being boring.

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Vocabulary

You begin by thinking of a word and then give the first letter. The next player thinks of a word beginning with this letter and gives the second letter. The third player thinks of a word that begins with the first two letters and adds a third. The object of the game is to avoid completing a word. When a player has completed three words or failed to add a letter they can rest their brain for the remainder of the game! You might need a dictionary handy to adjudicate on some words.

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One minute please!

The aim of the game is to talk for one minute on a given subject. You announce the topic and a member of the group is randomly selected to speak for one minute. Use a pack of cards to randomly select i.e. person who draws the lowest number. Choose subjects to stimulate the imagination and which may be amusing. Put a stopwatch on each person to see how long they last before drying up! Subjects might include, my earliest memories, my favourite computer game, why beans are good for you, 10 things you can do with potatoes, Alligator wrestling

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Newspaper puzzle

Divide into teams of five or six people and give each group a copy of the SAME newspaper. Ask them to spread the newspaper out in front of each team. Describe a particular advertisement, article, fact or picture from the paper and the group has to find it, rip it out and bring it to you. The first team to bring it gets a point. Continue calling out items and the winning team is the one with the most points. Watch the paper fly.

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Name grid

Divide the young people into groups of four. Each group needs paper and pens. Ask them to draw a grid on which they write their forenames. For example,

S I M O N

W E N D Y

R O B E R T

Give each team three minutes to write down as many words (three letters or more) that they can make only using the letters in their names. Letters must adjoin each other in the grid, but do not have to be in a straight line.

When the time is up each team adds up their score.

3 or 4 letter words = 1 point

5 letter word = 2 points

6 letter word = 3 points

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Line up

Ask the youth group to line up. Works best with 8-10 in a line. If you've got a bigger group, split them up and challenge each line to complete the task first. Ask the group to form a new line in order of...

- Height, from smallest to tallest.
- Birthdays, from January through to December.
- Shoe size, from smallest to largest.
- Alphabetical first names (A-Z).
- Alphabetical mothers first names.
- Alphabetical grandmother's first names!

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Who am I?

Prepare a self-adhesive label or post-it note for each young person in your group. Write on it the name of a well-known or famous person. This can be an historical character or current sportsman, musician, TV personality, celebrity etc. Have a good mix of men and women. Keeping the names hidden, stick the post-it notes on the foreheads of everyone in the group. They must then ask questions of the others to find out their identity. Each person takes a turn to ask questions and figure out who they are. For example, Am I alive? Am I female? Am I in a band? Only yes or no questions can be asked. If the answer is no, their turn is over. If the answer is yes, they can ask another question and keep going until they get a no, or guess who they are. Keep playing until everyone has guessed, or if time is short, stop after the first few correct answers.

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Pass the orange

Ask the young people to form a circle. Give the first young person a large orange and explain they need to pass this around the circle. No problem. BUT, it has to be passed around the circle using only chin and neck. If the orange is dropped, it must be returned to the previous player in the circle and the game restarts. A camera is a must for this game!

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Chocolate chomp

Another old party game, but still lots of fun. Ask everyone to sit in a circle on the floor. In the middle of the circle place a large bar of chocolate on a plate, a knife, a fork and three items of clothing – gloves, scarf and a cap. (Don't forget to remove the wrapper from the chocolate!) Each person in the circle takes a turn at rolling a dice. On throwing a six they run to the middle of the circle, put on the items of clothing and try to eat as much chocolate as possible. However, they can only cut it with the knife and pick it up with the fork. As soon as someone else throws a six, they run to the middle, put on the gloves, hat and cap, and take over. Continue until all the chocolate is eaten.

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Song scramble

Before the youth meeting write out the first lines from several well-known songs, but write down only one line on each piece of card. Make sure that only enough songs are used to cover the number of people present. The cards are then scattered on the floor. Once the game begins each person grabs a card and tries to find the holders of the other cards which will complete the verse or section of the song. The winning group is the first one to correctly assemble and sing their song. Tape the songs to playback later. Here are a couple of examples which show my age

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Pass the polo

Invite the group to line up in teams of six. Give each person a toothpick, which they must hold in their mouth. The person at the front of the line has a polo on his toothpick and he must (without using his hands) pass the polo down the line. If anyone drops their sweet, the team must start again from the front of the line with a new polo.

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Knots

Divide your group into teams of 6-8. Each team forms a small circle. Ask them to extend their right hand across the circle and hold the left hand of the other team member opposite them. Then extend their left hand across the circle and hold the right hand of another group member. The task is to unravel the spider's web of interlocking arms without letting go of anyone's hands. Give them a three minute time limit to complete the task. Pressure!

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Twenty questions

20 questions is an old party game which encourages deductive reasoning and creativity. One player is selected to think of an item. The rest of the group tries to guess the item by asking a question which can only be answered with a simple "Yes" or "No." Truthful answers only please, as anything else will ruin the game.

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Charade relay

A simple party game but great fun. Make a list of 20 popular TV programmes. Divide your group into smaller teams who base themselves around the ground floor of your house! You stand somewhere in the middle. The game begins by each team sending one person to you. Show them the first TV programme on your list. They return to their team and silently act it out in front of the group. As soon as someone guesses it, that person runs to you for the next clue and repeats the process. The winning group is the one which has acted out and guessed 20 programmes.

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The human chair

Invite everyone to stand in a circle shoulder to shoulder. Each person then turns to the right to face the back of the person in front of them. Ask them to place their hands on the shoulder of the person in front. On the count of three they slowly begin to sit down on the lap of the person behind. As long as everyone is helping the person in front of him or her to sit, then everyone should be supporting the weight of everyone else. Of course, should someone slip, the game becomes 'human dominoes.' It might take a couple of attempts to complete the challenge.

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Body spell

Divide the young people into teams of five. They will need to play this game with bare feet. The groups can play against each other or the clock (five second time limit). Using a felt tip marker write three letters on each team member. Either two hands (palms) and one foot (sole) or one hand and two feet.

1. TDO
2. HYI
3. EHR
4. BFT
5. OCS

As you call out a series of 4, 5, 6 or 7 letter words the group has to spell the word using combinations of hands and feet. Select 20 words from the list below. The finished words must be clearly visible to the leader.

4 Letter words: rest, fist, dice, trot, crib, boot, rich, host.

5 letter words: shoot, first, drift, shirt, roost, shred, hired

6 letter words: forest, theory, bitter, bother, frosty, boiled, strict

7 letter words: thirsty, ostrich, october, boosted, shifted, hoisted.

8 letter word: stitched

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Backward clumps

Divide into pairs. Ask each pair to sit on the floor with their partner, backs together, feet out in front and arms linked. Their task is to stand up together. Once everyone has done this, two pairs join together and the group of four try to repeat the task. After they succeed, add another two and try again. Keep adding people until your whole group is trying to stand together. A sight to behold!

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Wink murder

Ask the group to sit in a circle. Choose a number of playing cards to match the number of young people in your group. Be certain your selection contains an ace. Each young person then draws a card. They must not comment or show it to anyone else. The player who chooses the ace is the murderer and he kills his victims by winking at them! The game begins quietly with players sitting looking at each other. When someone catches the eye of the killer and is winked at, they are killed, and can die in any manner they choose. Some prefer to die quietly with a whimper, some opt for the blood curdling scream technique, while others might fall off their seat and lie prone on the floor. The object is to identify the murderer while trying not to be killed in the process. An incorrect guess results in instant death!

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Movie star scramble

Divide the group into pairs, each with a paper and pen. Ask them to visit the cards you have previously prepared and placed around the room. Their goal is to unscramble the names of 20 famous movies stars i.e.

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Buzz Fizz

Separate the group into groups of 10 (or thereabouts depending on the size of your group). They have to count from 1 to 50 as a group. However, the catch is that at all multiples of five they must say "Buzz!" and at all multiples of seven and at any number that also contains the name seven, they must say "Fizz!". If the group messes up, they have to start over again. As the groups finish, have them stand up and cheer.

For your reference (don't use this while playing the game):

Buzz Numbers 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50

Fizz Numbers 7, 14, 17, 21, 27, 28, 35, 37, 42, 47, 49

http://www.jubed.com/youth_ministry/view/Buzz-Fizz/?s=9

Marshmallow Tower

For this game, you need packet(s) of marshmallows and packet(s) of spaghetti. Split the group into two or more teams. Generally between 4-8 is the ideal team size. The goal is to see which group builds the highest tower using only the items provided. The towers must be stable.

http://www.jubed.com/youth_ministry/view/Marshmallow-Tower/?s=9

Mine Field

This game teaches kids the value of communication and trust. It works best if you have a large area, indoor or outdoor. Setup a series of obstacles (chairs, tables, balls, etc). Ask the group to pair off - one person is blind folded and must make their way through the 'mine field' by listening to their partner. Their partner verbally talks them through but cannot enter the mine field. If the person hits a 'mine' they must return to the start. After everyone has gone through, swap roles.

http://www.jubed.com/youth_ministry/view/Mine-Field/?s=9

What You Don't Know

Tape a blank piece of paper (poster board - kind of like a billboard over the person's head) on everyone's back. The members are to write a compliment or positive comment on everyone's back. At the end of the session, explain that a lot of times we tend to give compliments behind someone's back and it is not very often that we actually say these things to people's faces. We sometimes take for granted the positive aspects of others. If you wish, you may also explain that criticisms often are given behind other's backs as well, and that it may be more effective if they go to the person, instead of others. Have the group members pair up with someone they would like to get to know better and remove the paper from each other's backs. They should then explain to that person why they would like to get to know him/her better.

<http://www.residentassistant.com/games/teambuilders/whatyoudontknow.htm>

Aardvark Relay

Divide the group into teams (the number of teams depends on the area you have available and group size). Place empty bowls on one side of the room, and bowls full of dried peas or M&Ms/Skittles on the other side. Make sure there is an equal number in each bowl. Give each team member a straw.

The aim of the game is for each team to transport a small pile of dried peas from a bowl on one side of the room to another bowl on the other side, using only their straw. They do this by sucking through the straw so the pea stays fixed to the end of the straw. If they drop the pea they must pick it up again using the straw. The winning team is the one that transports all the peas first.

Lesson - Talk about our tendency to want to hold onto material things and the costs & difficulties involved with that. A good bible verse to use is Luke 12:15-21.

http://www.jubed.com/youth_ministry/view/Aardvark-Relay/?s=9

Who Am I?

Write the names of celebrities, political figures, cartoon characters, book characters, etc. on post-it notes or index cards. You can choose one category or mix them up. Use a different person for each note. Place a sticky note on the back (or forehead) of each participant. The participants are to figure out who they are, but can only do so in the following manner. Find a partner and read each other's sticky notes. You may ask the other person three questions to which there are yes or no answers. Once your questions have been asked and answered, make a guess as to your identity. If you are correct, move the sticky note to your chest and you become a "consultant" who gives clues to those still trying to figure out their identities. If you are not correct, find a new partner and repeat the process.

Lesson - Identity in Christ - how do you define/introduce yourself?

<http://www.kimskorner4teachertalk.com/classmanagement/icebreakers.html#Name>

Watch your words

For this game you need a few tubes of toothpaste. Ask students to take all the toothpaste out of the tube as quick as possible into a bowl. Then ask them to put the toothpaste back inside the tube. Obviously this is a little more difficult.

Lesson - Watch how you speak because it's much more difficult (if not impossible) to take our words back. James 3:6, James 1:26, Proverbs 21:23, etc

http://www.jubed.com/youth_ministry/view/Watch-your-words/?s=9