



# **Energisers & Icebreakers**



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# Energisers & Icebreakers

## Briefing Sheet

This document provides a number of ice-breakers and energisers that can be used at the start of the Youth Club Young Volunteer training sessions, or just because they're fun!

Please see individual briefs for materials required.

### Title: There's a bomb under my chair

**Time:** as long or short as you want

**Venue:** Medium sized room, cleared of trip hazards

**Materials:** Chairs

**Instructions:** The group randomly place chairs around an area (at arm's length from each other). The idea is to move off your chair before it explodes. To do this each person must make a non-verbal contact with another person (by winking, shaking their head etc.) and quickly change places. Each person then makes contact with another person before their new chair explodes and so on. Continue until the group has been warmed up or exhausted!

### Title: Finger grab / finger snatch

**Time:** as long or short as you want

**Venue:** Small room

**Materials:** None

**Instructions:** The group stands in a circle. Each person holds out their left hand, palm facing up. With their right hand they point their index finger down to the open palm of the person on their right. On the count of three each person attempts to grab the finger of the person to their left, whilst at the same time pulling away their right hand to prevent getting trapped. A few rounds of this works as an ice breaker.

### Title: Towel Chuck

**Time:** as long or short as you want

**Venue:** Medium sized room

**Materials:** Towel or similar soft floaty object

**Instructions:** Begin with the group sitting or standing in a circle. One person needs to start in the middle (you first). A towel or similar soft floaty object is thrown around the circle from person to person in any order. The person in the middle must try to either touch the knee of the person holding the towel or intercept it in flight. If this happens the person in the middle swaps places with the towel thrower or holder.

### Title: Honey I love you!

**Time:** as long or short as you want

**Venue:** Small room

**Materials:** Chairs

**Instructions:** The group sits in a circle with one person in the middle (you again!). The idea is for the person in the middle to get a seat. They attempt this by kneeling in front of someone and saying in their best over acting style "Honey I love you!". The person has to reply "Honey, you know I love you but I just can't smile". If the person smiles or laughs they lose their chair.

<b>Title: Splat!!!</b>	
<b>Time:</b> as long or short as you want	<b>Venue:</b> Medium sized room
<b>Materials:</b> None	
<b>Instructions:</b> The group stands in a circle with you in the middle. Each person holds an overflowing (imaginary) custard pie in each hand. Then you randomly point at a person in the circle. That person must duck immediately out of the way because the people either side of the ducker will throw their custard pie at each other. They both shout SPLAAATTT!!! The first to do so wins. The loser steps back or sits down out of the circle. Eventually you will be left with only two people who have to duel to determine the winner.	

<b>Title: Rapid Sculptures</b>	
<b>Time:</b> as long or short as you want	<b>Venue:</b> Medium sized room
<b>Materials:</b> None	
<b>Instructions:</b> The group stands in a circle with you in the middle. This game works in threes. Each time you point at a person they become the middle of a three person human sculpture of an animal or object. The people to the left and right have to react immediately as well. Here are some examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Elephant</b> – the middle person becomes the trunk and the two flankers become the ears.</li> <li>• <b>Rabbit</b> – the middle person becomes the rabbit with the paws and big teeth and the others are its thumping rear legs.</li> <li>• <b>Palm tree</b> – the middle person is the tree and has their hands waving above their heads making swishing noises; the others become fronds with arms blowing in the wind on either side. The rest is up to you...</li> </ul>	

<b>Title: Change places if...</b>	
<b>Time:</b> as long or short as you want	<b>Venue:</b> Medium sized room, cleared of trip hazards
<b>Materials:</b> Chairs	
<b>Instructions:</b> The group sits in a circle with you in the middle, chairs work best for this one. The idea is for the person in the middle to get a seat. You do this by saying “change places if you are...”. It could be wearing black, going on holiday, wearing trainers etc. Anyone this applies to has to rush to change places with someone else who is swapping. Your job is to grab a vacant chair before anyone else. The last person left without a chair carries on the game with “change places if...”. You can add a little more excitement by adding a Geronimo where everyone changes places.	

<b>Title: At the races</b>	
<b>Time:</b> as long or short as you want	<b>Venue:</b> Small room
<b>Materials:</b> None	
<b>Instructions:</b> The group are standing in a circle close together, shoulders touching. Everybody begins by drumming on their legs to make the sound of the horses. The race begins with you giving the commentary - “they’re off! Round the first bend (lean in direction of bend) over the jumps (arms flung in the air shouting hurray) single, double or triple jumps can be done, past the Royal Box (everyone looks through their binoculars and shouts “I say, their goes my filly”, beer tent (all should LAAAARGER while swigging back a pint), the water jump (everyone swims). Add more of your own.	

<b>Title: Fireworks!</b>	
<b>Time:</b> as long or short as you want	<b>Venue:</b> Small room
<b>Materials:</b> None	
<b>Instructions:</b> A similar game. Stand in a circle. A firework is 'zipped' around the circle, with the person making a big arm movement in the direction it is sent. The firework can be sent back the way it came by hitting a rubber tree by the person raising a wobbly arm and shouting "BOING!". It can be made to jump a person by hitting a tin roof, that person puts their hands over their head in a triangle "CLANG!" or send it across to someone else "WHOOSH!" by pointing their hand at someone. Should be very noisy and you can always add more fireworks.	

<b>Title: A What?</b>	
<b>Time:</b> as long or short as you want	<b>Venue:</b> Small Room
<b>Materials:</b> None	
<b>Instructions:</b> A great quiet game with the group sat in a circle. You begin by saying that they are all goldfish and they only have a 2 second memory. Start by passing an object around to your left or right saying "this is a ...pen". The person who takes it has already forgotten what it is and asks "a what?". You repeat "A pen", they then take the pen and pass it on to the next person saying "This is a pen" the next person looks at the pen but has now forgotten what the last person has said and replies "a what?". The first person has also forgotten what the object is and asks you "a what?", you reply "a pen!". They now know and turn to the next person and repeat "a pen". The second person then turns to the third person with the pen saying, "this is a pen". This continues around the circle with everyone checking back down the line. It ends when the object has returned to you. You could be really mean and introduce a second object.	

<b>Title: Defender</b>	
<b>Time:</b> as long or short as you want	<b>Venue:</b> Small room
<b>Materials:</b> Soft toy	
<b>Instructions:</b> The group stand in a circle with two people in the middle. One person is the defender the other is the friend. The group have a soft toy which they throw around to try and hit the friend in the circle. The defender's job is to stop the object hitting the friend. If the toy hits the friend, then the defender becomes the friend and the thrower the defender. Simple!	

<b>Title: Rainstorm</b>	
<b>Time:</b> as long or short as you want	<b>Venue:</b> Small room
<b>Materials:</b> None	
<b>Instructions:</b> A quiet energiser that you can use to calm a group before a review. The group stand in a circle. You narrate a story that describes a rainstorm. It's early morning and you are looking out of the window. The sky darkens and small droplets of rain begin to run down the windowpanes. The group will create the sound of the approaching storm. They start by the person on your right copying your movements. This filters round the group as one by one each person takes up the action of the person their right. As you describe the clouds building you begin gently rubbing your index fingers together, when the sound has travelled around the circle you introduce the next sound by clicking your fingers. This becomes light clapping followed by heavy clapping, as the storm is overhead and ends with the sun shining through. As the last sound works its way around the circle the silence should be very powerful.	

<b>Title: Paper, Scissors, Stone</b>	
<b>Time:</b> as long or short as you want	<b>Venue:</b> Small room
<b>Materials:</b> Playing cards, coins or pieces of paper	
<b>Instructions:</b> Each person is given three playing cards, coins or pieces of paper or anything handy. The aim is to finish with more cards than anyone else. Everyone wanders around and finds someone to gamble with. Both players then decide how many cards to gamble. They can't bet more than two cards at a time. The pair then play paper, scissors, stone (stone blunts scissors, paper envelops stone, scissors cut paper): the winner collects the cards and moves on to the next person. If a person loses all their cards they can go to a prearranged place and there they can beg, plead, sob, cry, bribe or blackmail passing player for any cards. When they have been given a card they can rejoin the game.	

<b>Title: Giants, Wizards and Dwarfs</b>	
<b>Time:</b> 30 mins or more	<b>Venue:</b> Large room
<b>Materials:</b> Rope or masking tape	
<b>Instructions:</b> Divide the group in half. You will need a large area for this with rope or masking tape (if indoors). Divide the area in half, plus a safe space at each end of the area for each team. The teams compete directly against each other. The group decides before each turn what creature they are going to be, either Giants, Wizards or Dwarfs (all the team must be the same creature). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giants eat Wizards but are frightened by Dwarfs</li> <li>• Wizards cast spells on Dwarfs but are eaten by Giants</li> <li>• Dwarfs frighten Giants but are zapped by Wizards.</li> </ul> <p>Each character has its own actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giants wave their arms above their heads and roar horribly</li> <li>• Wizards zap spells with their hands, shouting "alacazam"</li> <li>• Dwarfs are little creatures who scurry around pointing their fingers and making little noises.</li> </ul> <p>The game: Teams get into a huddle and decide what creature they are. On a pre-arranged signal the two teams run up to the centre line and play out the actions of their creature. Which ever team wins then chases the losing team back to their safe area. If the winning team catches any of the losing team they become part of the winning team. The winning team will be the team which captures all of the opposing team.</p>	

<b>Title: Human Knot</b>	
<b>Time:</b> as long or short as you want	<b>Venue:</b> Medium sized room
<b>Materials:</b> None	
<b>Instructions:</b> Stand the group in a small circle. The group place their right hand into the circle and take the hand of someone opposite. They then put their left hand into the circle and take the hand of <b>someone different</b> . The aim is to untangle the mess of hands into a large circle without letting go of hands. <p><i><b>N.B.</b> watch out for standing on arms or twisted wrists (the group can rotate grips but not let go) if done properly it should end in a large circle with people facing in opposite directions.</i></p>	

**Title: Counters****Time:** as long or short as you want**Venue:** Medium sized room**Materials:**

**Instructions:** For this game you need two teams in a queue. The first person from each team runs to you and you give them a number. They then run to the back of their queue. The aim is to pass the number to the front person without speaking but using a code when they tap the person in front of them on:

- Left shoulder for 100s
- Head for 10s
- Right shoulder for digits

For example 537 would be five taps on the left shoulder, three on the head and seven on the right. Each person waits for the coded number to reach them then passes it forward until it reaches the front.

**Title: Chocolate Six****Time:** as long or short as you want**Venue:** Small room**Materials:** Bar of chocolate, plate, knife and fork and dice, dressing up clothes.

**Instructions:** Sit your group in a circle. In the middle, place a bar of chocolate on a plate, a knife and fork and some dressing up clothes i.e. hat, gloves, scarf etc. The group take it in turns to throw the dice. If they throw a six they run into the middle, put on all the clothes and attempt to eat the chocolate. They can only eat using the knife and fork. Whilst they're doing this, the group members continue to try and throw a six. If one is thrown they run into the centre, take the clothes off the person on the middle and start to eat the chocolate. The game continues until all the chocolate is eaten.

**Title: The Train****Time:** 10 mins, depending on group size**Venue:** Medium sized room**Materials:** None

**Instructions:** The whole group forms a circle, a worker wanders round doing a steam train impression. The worker stops at a participant (preferably another worker to get it started) and says 'I am a steam train and I have stopped at station...?' The participant gives their name (e.g. Vicky) and the 'Train' shouts 'It's Vicky, it's Vicky, it's Vicky Vicky Vicky' with much arm waving, singing etc. Vicky then joins on to the end of the train (as a carriage) and the train moves on to the next participant, repeats the question and both train and carriage sing shout etc. This is repeated until all have joined the train.

**Title: Marriage Guidance****Time:** as long or short as you want**Venue:** Medium sized room**Materials:** Balloons

**Instructions:** Participants pair up and each is given a balloon. The facilitator tells the group what they have to do when she shouts a specific number. She then shouts a number and the participants have to do whatever the number relates to, e.g.

1. Compliment your partner
2. Insult your partner
3. Fall on the floor and pretend to be dead
4. Hit your partner with the balloon

Carry on until bored!

<b>Title: No Teeth Allowed</b>	
<b>Time:</b> as long or short as you want	<b>Venue:</b> Small room
<b>Materials:</b> None	
<b>Instructions:</b> The group sits in a circle. For the whole game, no-one is allowed to show their teeth - if you do you lose! To cover your teeth, you pull your lips inward over your teeth to hide them. One member starts the game by asking the person sat next to her/him 'Is Mrs Marmalade here?' The person responds 'I don't know if Mrs Marmalade is here, let me ask my neighbour'. This keeps going round the circle. Smiling is permitted, as long as your teeth don't show, when someone shows their teeth due to laughter, they are out! Pulling faces whilst asking and answering the questions is allowed as a tool for making other people laugh. Carry on until one person remains or you are bored!	

<b>Title: People Knitting</b>	
<b>Time:</b> as long or short as you want	<b>Venue:</b> Small room
<b>Materials:</b> Long piece of string	
<b>Instructions:</b> Tie a cold spoon to the end of a piece of string and get all the participants to form a circle. The first person takes the spoon and threads <b>up</b> through their clothing (for example, up a trouser leg and out through the shirt), the spoon is then passed to the next person who threads the spoon <b>down</b> through their clothing (for example, down a t-shirt, down the waistband of a skirt), the next person threads the spoon <b>up</b> through their clothing and so on. Each participant does this until each person is 'knitted' into the game. The string is then unthreaded by the person next to each participant, rather than the participant themselves. Be careful here of oppressive behaviour and unwanted touching.	

<b>Title: Royal Flushes</b>	
<b>Time:</b> 15 mins, depending on group size	<b>Venue:</b> Medium sized room
<b>Materials:</b> Pack of cards, flipchart paper and marker pen, blu-tak	
<b>Instructions:</b> The participants sit in a circle. The group facilitator takes a pack of playing cards and turns them over on at a time for all to see. When the cards listed below come up, the group have to follow the given instructions (it's a good idea to write these on a flipchart, as people forget for the first few times).	
A Jack:	everyone shouts 'I'm alright Jack'
A Queen:	everyone stands up and curtsies
A King:	everyone stands up and waves majestically
An Ace:	everyone moves one seat to the left in the circle
A seven:	everyone does all of the above in the above order
	Try rotating the dealer. Add an element of competition by saying that the slowest person to do any of the actions drops out if you want.