**YOUTHCAN! TRAINING MATERIAL**

GAME IDEAS

**ICEBREAKERS & GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER**

**Three truths and a lie**

Everyone writes their name and four pieces of information about themselves on a large sheet of paper. For example, “Alfonse likes singing, loves football, has five wives and loves PRA.” This works best when you give the group some time to think about their statements. Once a person makes their statements, the rest of the group must guess, or vote on, which statement is the lie. You could play as a team or individually. You could also get each group member to write down his or her own answers and see who gets the most correct.

**Howdy howdy**

Participants stand in a circle. One person walks around the outside of the circle and taps someone on the shoulder. That person walks in the opposite direction around the circle, until the two people meet. They greet each other three times by name, in their own language. The two people then race back, continuing in opposite directions around the circle, to take the empty place. Whoever loses, walks around the circle again and the game continues until everyone has had a turn.

**Mirror me**

Minimum group size: 4

Resources: Chair

Form a standing circle with a chair in the middle. Someone in the group goes to the middle and uses the chair as a prop. People on the outside have to guess what the prop is. They call out their guesses. If correct, that person goes to the middle and invents a new prop. Examples could be using the chair as a bicycle, trumpet, hat, etc.

Variation for getting to know each other: Improvise with the chair in order to demonstrate a fact about yourself (e.g. a hobby, an activity, an attribute, a characteristic trait, etc.) Other have to guess, and whoever guesses correctly goes next.

**Names and adjectives**

Participants think of an adjective to describe how they are feeling or how they are. The adjective must start with the same letter as their name, for instance, “I’m Henri and I’m happy” or “I’m Arun and I’m amazing.” As they say this, they can also mime an action that describes the adjective.

**Icebreaker questions**

A great way to help people open up is to ask them fun questions that allow them to express their personality or interesting things about them. Here is a list of safe, useful icebreaker questions to help break the ice:

1. If you could have an endless supply of any food, what would you get?
2. If you were an animal, what would you be and why?
3. What are you good at that no one would expect?
4. When was the last time you did something for the first time? What was it?

**Find the fact**

A pool of questions is prepared and written on separate papers. Each person has to draw one paper and then find a person in the group to whom the fact applies.

E.g. find a person who…

* …has climbed a 4000m mountain
* …is vegetarian
* …does not like coffee

**Collective portraits**

Each participant has a sheet of paper and walks around the room to the beat of music. When the music stops, participants sit next to the closest person to them and give them their paper. They each draw the outline of the other person’s head. This process is repeated with four more people, each time adding another facial feature until participants create a collective representation of the group.

**Mix and meet**

Get each person to grab some M&M's. Tell them not to eat them.

Assign a different meaning to each colour, such as:

Blue = animals
Green = school
Yellow = friends
Red = hobbies
Brown = music/movies

However many M&Ms they have in their hands, that is how many facts they have to tell. For example, if they have three yellow, they would have to say three facts about their friends.

**Where do you stand?**

The Where Do You Stand game helps people get to know each other’s opinions and stances a bit better. It can be played with medium to extra-large sized groups and is a good way to get everyone moving. The game can vary in time depending on how many questions you use; in general allow for 5-15 minutes as a good range.

To play this game, you will ask everyone several questions. Everyone will then respond by standing somewhere along the imaginary line according to how strong of an opinion they have on that item. For example, if you ask people “Coffee or tea?” people will stand far along the left-hand side if they strongly prefer coffee, and on the far end of the right-hand side if they strongly prefer tea. If they are neutral, they will stand in the middle.

You can ask many kinds of questions. For example:

* Winter or summer?
* Sweet or salty?
* Coffee or tea?
* Rock music or classical?
* Chocolate or strawberry?
* Morning person or night person?
* Dog or cat?

Many of these questions can be very funny. You can also ask many deep questions as well — use your imagination and have fun!

**ENERGIZERS AND ACTIVITIES**

**One – two – jump!**

Each pair stands opposite each other, facing each other. First task: Alternating, count from 1 to 3 together (i.e. Person A counts 1, person B counts 2, person A counts 3, person B counts 1…). Try to be as fast as possible. Second task: Keep going, but replace every 2 with a clap (i.e. person A counts 1, person B claps, person A counts 3, person B counts 1, person A claps…). Third task: Keep going, but replace every 3 with a jump (i.e. person A counts 1, person B claps, person A jumps, person B counts 1…). Try to become faster and faster. Any variation of tasks is possible.

**The sun shines on…**

Setup chairs around a circle but have one less chair than there are people in the game. Someone (we suggest a leader) starts in the middle and says, "The sun shines on people who (choose an attribute that more than one person, including the person saying it, in the room has – e.g. have blue eyes, are wearing red, have a sibling, etc.) All the people who share that attribute must swap places and the person from the middle must try to take one of their places, leaving a new person in the middle. Continue until everyone is exhausted or has had a go.

Variation: One person then stands in the middle and asks the group a question, starting with "Have you ever ...” It must be something they have done themselves.

**Zip zap zop**

Minimum group size: 10

Stand in a circle and get participants to place their palms together in front of them. Explain that inside their palms is a ball of energy. Next, explain to the group that Zip Zap Zop refer to different directions that they will point their hands.

* Zip: left
* Zap: right
* Zop: across the circle (or whatever you like)

Whoever starts chooses either Zip, Zap or Zop and says it aloud. For example, someone says “Zip” and passes/points their hands to the person on their left. It carries on (domino effect) with each person turning to the left with their hands and saying “Zip” until someone says something different, such as “Zap”, and then the direction changes to the right. It can just get faster or people who slip up sit down. You can add different sounds like ‘boing’ that bounce the energy back to the person who sent it to you.

A variation of this game is that again your get everyone to form a circle. This time, however, you have one person quickly clap and points at another, while saying “zip.” The person who received the “zip” then claps and points at another, while saying, “zap.” That person then claps and points to someone while saying “zop.” The pattern continues, “zip, zap, zop, zip, zap, zop….” The goal is to pass the words and energy around as quickly as possible, which is harder than it seems.

Many theatre companies use this as a warm-up before going on stage, to establish teamwork and to encourage quick thinking. If you use this with a group and find it takes several tries to get into the rhythm of the game, keep going! Eventually, the group will begin to go at lightning speed and you will find it hard to keep up yourself.

**Penguin race**

Minimum group size: 6

Participants start by slapping their hands against their thighs and running on the spot mimicking how a penguin runs. The leader should get participants to do this slowly to start with, so they become accustomed to it and have them to speed up at a later stage. Leaders should introduce further commands such as left bends, right bends and double bends, which all include speeding sound effects and actions whilst still running on the spot.

Other actions to include:

* Penguin going through a tunnel
* Penguin on ice
* Penguin at the disco
* Penguin over a ski jump

**Bump tag**

Ideal group size: 10

The leader must select a cat and a mouse from the group. The aim of the game is for the cat to chase the mouse. If the cat manages to catch the mouse, they then become the cat and have to do the chasing. Everyone else in the group pairs up and stands side-by-side, spread out in the activity area. The mouse changes throughout the game by the mouse linking to the side of a pair. The person on the opposite side to where the mouse has linked then becomes the new mouse and the cat has to chase them instead.

**Keep your distance**

Minimum group size: 8

Each person mentally selects two people and thinks of a distance for each of them. The object is to walk round the room whilst maintaining the chosen distance from each of the two people, e.g. stay two feet from one person and seven feet from the other.

**Reactor**

Minimum group size: 10

Standing or sitting in a circle, get participants to hold their right thumb and index finger in a circle to their right. Next, get them to hold up their left index finger and place inside the hold created by the person on the left. When everyone has done this and fingers are placed inside the circles, the leader shouts, “go” or counts to three and each person has to try to free their finger from the left and catch the finger on their opposite side.

**Coconut**

Participants write the word “coconut” with their bodies. Get quicker as you go. It can also be done with 1 + 1 = 2, then 2 + 2 = 4, and then 4 + 4 = 8.

**Hello kitty**

Set up by drawing a line in the middle of the room with tape. Split the group in two and have them stand on opposite sides of the line. One side are the kittens. The other side are the puppies. Kittens cannot smile or laugh. Puppies must say hello to the kittens in any way possible and try to make any of them smile or laugh. Puppies may not cross the line on the floor; everything else is allowed. When a kitten smiles or laughs, it automatically becomes a puppy and must cross to the other side of the line. Continue until only one kitten is left, standing as the winner!

To extend the game: Switch kittens into puppies and do it again OR make the winning kittens into a team and see which one lasts longer.

**The lion sleeps**

Use the following video <https://youtu.be/Vebx1Ja9zm8> (which young people had a lot of fun with during the meeting in Albania)

Divide participants in two equal groups (ask them voluntarily who wants to be in the dog group and who wants to be in the hippo group). Once divided show them the video, played along with the song and instruct them to do exactly the moves of the hippo or the dog, according to the group they are in.

**TEAM BUILDING EXERCISES**

**Create a team logo**

Materials: pens, old magazines/newspapers, glue

Begin by asking all participants to create a group logo/image/brand, based on information they heard about each other from the introduction exercises. They can use something personal (e.g. a photo) or take pictures and images from magazines and newspapers available in the room. They can also use objects in their pockets, purses and wallets as inspiration. Based on these objects and pictures, the group then creates a logo/image that represents them as a team. They can be as creative as they want (e.g. they can draw, make a key message, etc.)