

Icebreakers

Here are some examples of Icebreakers

Coin in my pocket: participants choose a coin from their purse or pocket and explain how old they were and/or what they were doing the year the coin was minted

Magic Wand: purchase and/or create a magic wand to pass around the group: what do they hope to learn in the training (what magic do they want to know?)

I wish: in small groups, ask participants to answer two questions: what do you wish would happen in this training and what do you wish would not happen in this training? Groups report back to larger group for discussion.

Who's here cheer: prepare a list of variables such as types of jobs, employers, favorite food, and favorite age of children to work with). As you name the variable, participants stand and cheer if they fall into that category. The louder and more intense the cheer indicates the enthusiasm of those in that category.

License plate: have participants imagine they are creating a 7 letter license plate that expresses their personality. If time allows, have them design and share it with group.

Most outrageous story: on strips of paper, participants write the most outrageous story they have from their work with children. Write their name on the back strip. Draw five strips from the group—ask the five people to come to the front of the room and try to match the story to the participant.

Fly away: using a loose sheet of paper, have participants write the answer to a question (your favorite preschool art activity, your favorite snack for toddlers, your favorite children's book etc . . .). Fold into a paper airplane, fly across the room—maybe a few times to mix them up. Taking the closest plane to them, find the original author to introduce to the group.

Two truths and a lie: distribute three craft sticks to each participant and ask them to think of two truths and one lie about themselves. Going around the room, they reveal their three statements to a partner and the partner must pick out which statement is a lie. If the person succeeds with the guess, they collect one of the sticks from the other. The object is to collect as many sticks as possible.

Twenty questions (especially helpful with groups that know already know each other well): have a preselected stack of index cards with recognizable characters or celebrities on each. Tape a card to each participant's back. They go around the room asking yes or no questions trying to figure out who they are.