



St Vincent
de Paul Society

England and Wales

Turning Concern into Action

GAMES & TEAM BUILDING





A bank of icebreakers & team building games:

Youth SVP is a space for faith, action and friendship. Some meetings will just be about celebrating and enjoying one another's company. In this guide you will find a bank of team building games and icebreakers to spark ideas to get you started.

Name Games: Do your group know each other?

Catch:

Your group will be sat on chairs in a circle. The introduction of the game can be personalised by the leader. To get a general idea of names, first of all go round asking everyone to say their name. The basic idea is to use either a ball or small toy and throw it randomly around the circle; get them to say the name of the person who they throw the ball to. After a while introduce the rule that if someone doesn't manage to catch the ball then that person and the 'thrower must do a forfeit: that is to share a fact with the group, a fact that they think no one else in the room will know e.g. favourite film.

Slap, clap, click, click:

(Judge your group) This takes knowledge of rhythm. Everyone in the group starts the above pattern together: slap, clap, click, click, slap, clap, click, click... The complicated part is that, similar to catch, the names of people are passed randomly across the circle. To do this you must say on the first 'Click' your own name, and on the second, someone else's. It will sound like this (first two being sounded) 'slap, clap,' Jen to Ruth. 'Slap clap,' Ruth to Liz. The only rule is you can't pass back to the person who just sent to you, so Ruth couldn't have passed to Jen.

Torpedo:

- Everyone stands in a circle.
- The person who is starting the game makes eye contact with someone else in the circle and then walks towards them. That person then makes eye contact with someone else and walks towards them etc.
- People lose a life if they do not gain eye contact with someone before they start walking, or if someone walks into their space before they have begun to move.
- Everyone has 3 lives and are out if they lose all 3!

Connection:

You will need a ball of wool and a group standing in a circle.

- The first person takes hold of the end of the wool and unwinds some of the ball.
- They say their name and something about themselves (favourite food, football team, pizza topping preference, how many siblings they have etc).
- If other people in the circle are the same e.g. also have 2 brothers, they put their hand up.
- Holding onto the end of the wool, they throw the ball creating the first connection and part of the web.
- This process is repeated to learn everyone's name and at the end there should be a large web of connections.



General Icebreakers:

Look Up, Look Down:

(Short) Fairly straight forward, everyone stands in a circle. The group leader says: "Look up!" (everyone look to the ceiling) On "Look down!" you must explain that they have to look into someone else's eyes, not the floor. If the person is looking back at you, then you are both either out or loose a life. That's if you want to play the life version to make the game longer; it's probably easier to go down in stages, e.g. loose one life- down on one knee, two lives- kneel on two knees, out after third live. Alternatively, you could get them to hold fingers up for how many lives are lost, but they could cheat.

Shopping:

Ask one volunteer to leave the room, while they are gone everyone else decides on a specific shop. E.g. butchers, bakers... then everyone in the group chooses an item from that shop, go round to make sure everyone has a different thing. The person gets called back into the room. On the count of 3, at exactly the same time everybody shouts their item. The person in the middle has to guess the shop. Sounds easy? It isn't! If they don't get it first time, you should count to three again, and at exactly the same time whisper your item. If they still can't get it, give them the option to either shout or whisper. If they are really struggling, you can get them to listen to one person to help.

Enemy Protector:

This is most suited to a large area. Start by getting the YP stood in a circle in an open area; they all need to be able to see each other. Everyone needs to choose someone, in their head, who they cannot bear to be near, someone they fear (emphasis it is only a game!). They cannot say this person's name aloud. Then pick a protector, someone who will protect you from harm. Again don't say this person's name aloud. Ok- the aim of the game is always have your protector in between you and your enemy. The problem is the two people you have picked, will also have chosen two other people, so they will be trying to 'get safe' as well. It end's up in chaos and lots of laughing. You can play a couple of times, ending each game whenever you think a suitable amount of time has passed.

1-10:

- The group have to count from 1-10.
- They cannot organise who takes which number or create any set pattern.
- One person cannot say two following numbers.
- If two people speak at the same time, the game has to begin again from 1.
- If they're good, you should bump it up to 20!

Do this, Do that:

- This game has very similar rules to Simon Says.
- When you tell the group to "Do this" they should copy your action.
- When you tell them to "Do that" they should not copy you.
- Anyone who copies your action when you say "Do that" is out.



Team Building:

Life Raft:

Need: one piece of newspaper per small group

- Place the newspaper in the middle of the floor. Explain that the room is very soon going to be shark infested, and the only way for the group to save themselves is to get everyone on the life raft (newspaper!).
- All the team members must remain on the raft for at least 3 secs with no part of their body touching the floor.
- Once the group manages this, make the paper smaller and get them to try again.

(Possible solution: find partner of equal size, stand opposite them in a circle holding both their hands, stand on one foot, lean back, use each others body weight to balance).

Electric Maze:

Need: sheet with electric maze grid on it (this can be made by laying out, on the floor, A4 pieces of paper in 5 by 6 squares).

- Before the group arrives, copy the grid onto a piece of paper and decide and draw the safe route through the maze.
- Explain to the group that nearly all the squares in the grid are electrified, and there is only one safe route through the maze.
- Their challenge is to get all their team through the maze.
- Only one person may enter the maze at a time, and they must start at the side you have decided has the entrance square.
- They may move forwards, backwards and sideways but not diagonally.
- If they step on an electrified square, you must make a sound (make up your own e.g. buzz, bang), and then they must leave the maze and the next person enters.
- Each team member must have 1 go before anyone has a 2nd attempt at making their way through the maze.
- Markers can't be used to show the correct route – this is a memory game!

Tower Bridge

Need: photo of Tower Bridge or another perhaps local landmark to you (be creative), a cereal box for each group, newspaper, pencil, scissors and cellotape.

- Their challenge is to create a working model of tower bridge (2 halves of the bridge lift and separate to let boats through and then return to original position) complete with boats and people using only the materials provided.

Magic Carpet

Need: 3 different sized towels

- Before the group arrive lay out the largest towel on the floor.
- Get everyone to stand on the material and explain to them that you want them to turn the towel over without any of the group touching the floor with any part of their body. If anyone does, they have to start all over again.
- If the group complete this easily, get them to try the same challenge with the middle sized piece of material and then the small one.