

# Ice Breakers

## Mummy Game Race

**Who:** Kids, Teens, Groups

**Materials:** Rolls of toilet paper (1 roll per 3 kids)

Divide volunteers into groups of three: 1 “mummy” and 2 “wrappers”. At your prompt, participants will begin to quickly wrap the mummy with the entire roll of toilet paper. Encourage them to be careful to rip the toilet paper. The first team to finish wins.

## Getting to Know You

**Who:** Kids, Teens, Groups

**Materials:** Bean bag, or beach ball, or small stuffed animal

Form a circle. Throw a beanbag, a light beach ball, or a small pillow around the circle. As each person catches it, have this person say his or her name. Continue with any of the ideas from the following list. Add other categories (15 to 20 minutes). This activity may be used for another session by presenting new categories. Ask the teens to come up with other categories.

Name

School

Grade

Favorite activity

Least favorite activity

Favorite holiday

Favorite food

Least favorite food

Favorite music group

Favorite color

Favorite sport (active or spectator)

If I won \$100, I would...

If I won \$1,000, I would...

If I could travel anywhere, I would go to...with... Taken from: Helping Teens Work Through Grief – Mary Kelly Perschy

## I Agree I Disagree

**Who:** Kids, Teens, Groups

**Materials:** Tape or string, list of questions

Place a line on the floor using tape or a string. Designate one side of the line as “I agree” and the other side of the line as “I do not agree.” Have the teens stand up and explain that you are going to read a list of statements. If they agree, then they move to the “I agree” side of the line. If they don’t agree or would answer “no” to the statement, then they should move to the “I do not agree” side. Read the statements one by one with ample time in between for people to move and see where others stand. (15 minutes)

It is fun to go to the beach on a sunny day. It is okay to go to the beach on a rainy day.

Looking at the stars is relaxing. Journaling helps me clear my head.

The school day should be shorter.

Skydiving is a healthy sport. Winter sports are scary. Scary movies are adventurous.

Scary movies keep me awake at night. Lasagna is a favorite food of mine.

Ice cream isn't all that it is cracked up to be. It is a personal decision whether or not to keep a cluttered room. It is all right to cry in public. Life has been a lot more confusing since I am grieving.

Life isn't fair. Growth can come from a painful situation.

There are people in my life who understand my grief. I know what to do with my anger.

I have a sense that the person who died is still connected with me.

I came here because someone insisted that I come.

## Egg Race

**Who:** Kids, Teens, Groups

**Materials:** Spoons, and two plastic Easter eggs

Divide volunteers into groups of two. Line up groups and the first two participants balance their egg on the spoon and try to make it across the room without dropping the egg on the count of "go." Then they run back to give the egg to the next person. The first team with all of its participants back to the starting point wins.

**Option two:** Divide participants into groups of two. All participants hold a plastic spoon. On the count of "go", participants only using their spoons transfer the egg to the next person. If the egg is dropped, they must go to the back of the line to try again. The first group to "walk" their egg down their line wins.

## Knobby Knees

**Who:** Kids, Teens, Groups

**Materials:** 2 quarters, ping pong balls, cotton balls (any small object) and two jars

Divide volunteers into two groups. Participants must hold the quarter between their knees and drop it into the jar. They then take the quarter back to the next person in line. First group done, wins.

## Knobby Knees II

**Who:** Kids, Teens, Groups

**Materials:** 2 blown up balloons

Divide volunteers into two groups. Participants must hold the balloon between their knees and run/waddle across the finish line. They then take the balloon back to the next person in line. First group done, wins.

## Sour Dill Pickle Challenge

**Who:** Kids, Teens, Groups

**Materials:** baby dill pickles, packets of lemon Kool-Aid (no sugar kind), small cups

Ask for volunteers. All participants need to do is dip their pickle in the Kool-Aid and devour. However, it will be very sour! They must dip after each bite. First one to finish wins.

## Clothespins

**Who:** Kids, Teens, Groups

**Materials:** You will need two clothes hangers with 20 clothespins clamped all over each of them.

Ask for two volunteers. When you say, "go", they must remove as many clothespins as possible *using only one hand* without dropping or putting them down. When one is dropped, stop and count the total for each.

Whomever has the most is the winner. Note: to make more challenging have participants use their non dominant hand.

## Balloon Over and Under

**Who:** Kids, Teens, Groups

**Materials:** You will need two blown up balloons.

Divide participants into two equal lines with a foot between them. When you say “go”, they pass the balloon over their head to the person behind them in line. The next team member then pass the balloon back between their legs to the person behind them. They must alternate over and under. The first team to get the balloon to the last person in line wins.

## Toilet Paper Over and Under

**Who:** Kids, Teens, Groups

**Materials:** You will need two rolls of toilet paper.

Divide participants into two equal lines with a foot between them. When you say “go”, they must carefully unroll some toilet paper and pass the roll over their head to the person behind them in line. The next team member then *carefully* passes the toilet paper back between their legs to the person behind them. They must alternate over and under. The first team to get the unbroken toilet paper to the last person in line wins.

## Shoe Scramble

**Who:** Kids, Teens, Groups

**Materials:** You will need participants shoes.

Divide participants into two teams. They must all take their shoes off and put them in a pile. Mix the shoes up as they form an even circle around the pile. On your command, they must quickly dig out their shoes and put them back on their feet. First team to have all the correct shoes on their feet wins.

## Cotton Ball Scoop

**Who:** Kids, Teens, Groups

**Materials:** You will need cotton balls, two empty bowls, two blindfolds, and two spoons.

Select two participants, blindfold them, and give them 30 seconds to transfer as many cotton balls as possible into the empty bowl using only the spoon (No help from their other hand). It’s hilarious because they feel like they are lifting air and often are scooping and transferring nothing at all on the spoon. The other kids really enjoy watching and cheering them on.

## Hula Chain

**Who:** Kids, Teens, Groups

**Materials:** You will need two Hula Hoops.

Divide participants into two teams and line them up along opposite walls facing each other. But don’t stand them too close to the wall so they can still maneuver. Have team member hold hands, creating two long chains. Start the Hula-hoop at one end of each team. The object is to maneuver the Hula-hoop down the chain without letting go of hands. They just have to wiggle and squirm it over their arms, shoulders and head!

## Life Saver Challenge

**Who:** Kids, Teens, Groups

**Materials:** You will need two Lifesavers and toothpicks.

Divide participants into two lines. Using only one hand, each team member must pass the life saver to the next person in line. The first team to pass to the end of the line wins.

Taken from: *Companioning the grieving child*. Patricia Morrissey. Activities – Van Petten of RadicalParenting.com

## If

**Who:** Kids, Teens, Groups

**Materials:** You will need handout with 20 “If” question cards cut out

Ask the group to sit in a circle. Place the 20 “If” card face down in a pile in the middle of the circle. The first person takes a card, read it out loud and gives their answer, comment or explanation. The card is returned to the bottom of the pile before the next person takes their card.

This is a simple icebreaker to get participants talking and listening to others in the group. Kee it moving and don’t play for too long. Write out additional “if” questions or ask group members to add questions.

If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?	If I gave you \$100,000 what would you spend it on?	If you could watch your favorite movie now, what would it be?	If you could talk to anyone in the world, who would it be?
If you could have a super power, what would it be?	If you could change anything about yourself, what would it be?	If you could be someone else, who would you be?	If you could have any question answered, what would it be?
If you could watch your favorite tv show, what would it be?	If you could have any kind of pet, what would it be?	If you could do your dream job 10 years from now, what would it be?	If you had to be allergic to something, what would it be?
If you sat next to a super hero on a bus, what would you talk about?	If money and time were no object, what would you be doing right now?	If you have one day to live over again, what day would you pick?	If you could live in any period in history, what would it be?
If you could eat your favorite food, what would it be?	If you could learn any skill, what would it be?	If you could buy a car right now, what would you buy?	If you could wish one thing to come true, what would it be?

## Name that Person

**Who:** Kids, Teens, Groups

**Materials:** You will need blank cards and pens (enough for each participant).

Divide participants into two teams. Give each person a blank piece of card. Ask them to write 5 little know 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 favorite food is spinach, my grandmother called me Bibi and my favor color is beige.”

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!)

Taken from: [www.insight.typepad.co.uk](http://www.insight.typepad.co.uk)

## Desert Island

**Who:** Kids, Teens, Groups

**Materials:** You will need blank cards and pens (enough for each participant).

Announce, “You have been exiled to a deserted island for a year. In addition to the essentials, you may take one piece of music, one book (which is not the Bible) and one luxury item you can carry with you i.e. not a boat to leave the island! What would you take and why?”

Allow a few minutes for the participants to write their list of three items, before sharing their choices with the rest of the group. As with most icebreakers and relationship building activities, it’s good for the group leaders to join in too.

## Would you rather..?

**Who:** Kids, Teens, Groups

**Materials:** Roll of masking tape.

Place a line of tape down the center 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 reading the questions. Below are some starter questions – ask the group to generate more for next time.

Note: questions can range for silly trivia to more serious content (this could be used as a group grief activity)

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 invisible or be able to read minds?

Be hairy all over or completely bald?

Be an apple or a banana?

Be the most popular or the smartest person you know?

Have permanent diarrhea or permanent constipation?

Go without TV or fast food for the rest of your life?

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?