

## Activities for Youth Advisory Councils

The icebreaker activities for the Rhode Island Department of Health Advisory Meetings are based on many ideas that are shared from trainings, camps, theater groups, scouts, vacation bible school and youth websites. The goal is to have a fun quick activity that youth and young adults can enjoy while meeting other members of the council. Cost and time are always considered and most involve very little in the way of supplies, preparation and can be reused.

### Supplies:

Large self-sticking Paper

Big Markers

Small sticky notes

Pens

Tape

Notebook

nametags

Sanitizer

Cleaning Wipes

Agendas

New Member packets including orientation, pre-survey, photo release, contact information, flyers

Door signs for meetings

Bean bags

Hula hoops

Jump ropes

## Create a Person

**Group size:** \*5-10

\*if larger, break into smaller groups

**Materials:**

Large sheet of paper and markers. The “person” can be drawn, listed or imagined

Before the activity starts-remind group one at a time and that one person can add on one thing but not negate the previous observations about the “person”

Sample questions:

Ask about pronouns

Appearance-hair, clothes, height, tattoos and piercings

Activities they like-skating, soccer, gaming

Transportation mode

Talent

Challenge

Pets

Goals

First and last letter of first name

Name “person” and then imagine he/she is tiny and pass around circle. This person can be used as an example when discussing disabilities and accommodations.

***Leadership Opportunity:*** a volunteer could lead activity and/or draw person

## I AM Poem

**Group Size:** any

**Materials:** copies of poem with blanks  
large sheet of paper if a group activity, pencils

I am .....( 2 special characteristics you have)  
I wonder.....(something you are curious about)  
I hear .....(an imaginary sound)  
I see.....(an imaginary sight)  
I want.....(a desire)  
I am .....( The first line of poem repeated)  
I Pretend.....(Something You Pretend to Do)  
I Feel.....(A feeling about something Imaginary)  
I Touch..... (An Imaginary Touch)  
I Worry.....( Something that Worries You)  
I Cry..... (Something that Makes You Sad)  
I am..... (The First Line of the Poem Repeated)  
I Understand..... (Something You Know to Be True)  
I Say..... (Something You Believe In)  
I Dream..... (Something You Dream About)  
I Try.....(Something You Make an Effort to Do)  
I Hope.....(Something You Hope For)  
I am.....(The First Line of the Poem Repeated)

### Variation

Could also use “created person” as the subject of the poem.  
Poem as part of orientation pack when a new member starts- before/  
after

**Leadership Opportunity:** Ask for volunteers to read out I AM poem

## Group Puzzle

**Group Size:** any but if group is large, split up into smaller groups

**Materials:** premade pictures/phrases that are cut into puzzle pieces. Glue on cardstock or cardboard.

Each member of group gets a piece of the puzzle. The group needs to create the puzzle without speaking.

Alternative:

- Small sticky notes are numbered and placed on each person's forehead. Group must line up in order without speaking.
- A pictures of a sequence event such as "learning to drive" the steps should be placed in order without speaking.

**Leadership Opportunity:** Volunteer could make the puzzle using magazines.

## Advocacy Quest

**Group Size:** any

**Materials:** pre-made advocacy cards based on group interests and needs. Use card stock

Can be played as a group or individually. Two volunteers take steps forward or back based on the cards they draw. They can ask for help deciding.

Ideas:

You ask the teacher for more time on your upcoming test. (+1)

You thank someone for helping you. (+1)

You didn't let the teacher know you were having an off day. (-1)

You did your homework (+1), but you left it at home (-1).

You're interested in music and poetry. You research classes at AS220 and other community organizations (+1)

You tell your doctor about a recent issue you've been having. (+1)

You research disability empowerment at home and share some of your favorite quotes online. (+1)

You understand why you have an IEP or 504 (+1)

You told your IEP team about what you're interested in. (+1)

You want to join a club or team but your friend doesn't want to go so you don't. (-1)

You know the side effects of medicine you are taking (+1)

You ask for an interpreter (+1)

You tried a new healthy recipe (+1)

You do not know the names of your medicine you take (-1)

Alternative: cards can be tailored to include other topics

**Leadership Opportunity:** moderating game or suggesting how to help advocate for a friend

## What Should I Do?

**Group Size:** 1:1 but can have a person representing a group

**Materials:** host cards, buzzers

Two volunteers face off in a battle to buzz in and declare if they should or shouldn't do what is on the card in the context of a physician's visit.

### Examples

Positives:

Be polite.

Ask questions.

Know the facts.

Know your emergency contact information.

Be early

Be prepared.

Be willing to compromise.

Negatives:

Yell

Come at the time of the appointment

Forget your health insurance card

Skip an appointment

Afraid to ask questions

***Leadership Opportunity:*** Ask for other scenarios

## Strike a Pose

**Group Size:** Any

**Materials:** none

The focus of the activity is to show the power of non-verbal communication. A few members of the group “freeze” in a pose that first shows a lack of confidence. It is up to the group to direct the volunteer to show a pose of confidence.

Alternatives:

Try different scenarios such as in a meeting, in a store, on the street, on stage

***Leadership Opportunities:*** *Volunteers to start*

## 4 Corners

**Group Size:** Any

**Materials:** 4 Large Sheets of Paper posted around room and big markers.

This is a good activity for a group that has a rolling start. Each paper has a question and the participants write in their answers. Once meeting starts, answers are read and if time allows, the author can elaborate. The questions may be based on topic speaker or seasonal.

**Leadership Opportunity:** Reading the responses or tallying answers.

## Document Hunt

**Group Size:**

**Materials:**

Optional: timer

Pseudo copies of documents they will need through transition

Insurance card, Social Security card, birth certificate, IEP, Evaluation report, utility bill, list of meds, important contact numbers, and date book.

Participants find hidden documents. Group then comes together and discusses why each is important giving the participants a chance to explain.

Alternative:

Documents you need for a job interview

Have papers mixed in that do not add value to "hunt" such as old receipts, outdated lists, crumpled papers

***Leadership Opportunity:*** Lead activity

## **Getting to Know You:**

**Group Size:** any but if group is larger than 10, break into 2

**Materials:** none

Participants gather in a circle. One person starts by stating their names and fruit. Then the next person says their name and fruit, but must also remember the fruit and name of the person next to them. Each person must remember the name and fruit of the people who went before them. It gets a little tricky if the group is large but always fun.

It is a great strategy for everyone to get comfortable with everyone's name and to make things fun.

Variations: favorite movie, book, commercial, sport or game

**Leadership Opportunity:** Challenge someone to name everyone's name

## **Creative Commonalities**

**Group Size:** Any but large group needs to be split into same size groups

**Materials:** timer or watch, pre-determined question

Break group into subsets of 4

Take 5 minutes to know each other. (Say your name, school, interests, and why you are involved in the Youth Advisory Council)

At the end of 5 minute, each group will have to find two things everyone in that group has in common and report that to group.

The group with the most creative thing in common wins.

Variation: Mix up groups

***Leadership Opportunity:*** Notetaker and Reporter

## **Not This but That**

**Group Size:** large group works best

**Materials:** large open space and predetermined questions.

Ahead of time form a list of 2 options. Option A goes to the left Option B goes to the right.

Ideas:

Inside/outside

Reading book/reading comics

Drawing/Painting

Beach/Forest

Climb a Tree/ Roll Down a Hill

Go to a Dance Party/ Go out with a few friends

Dogs/Cats

Ride a bike/Ride a Skateboard

Early bird/night owl

Live music/Live theater

## **Color Questions**

Group Size: 20 or less

Materials: M&M's or other multicolored candy -give each person 5 different colors Do not eat candy!

Each color represents a different question (questions on jobs, health care, etc.) It gets the youth thinking about different things that may arise as they transition from youth to adulthood.

Ideas:

Housing

Jobs/training

Transportation

Travel

## **Find Your Twin**

**Group Size:** Any

**Materials:** pre-determined questions

The game is played in 2 parts.

First part members of the group are asked to “twin” and ask 3 or 4 set questions. This game should be played so that members that know each other well, are split up.

Examples:

Find someone with the same birthday month

Find someone who likes similar music

Find someone with same ear lobes

Find someone wearing....( a specific color, hat, shoes)

Second part, once each twin has been identified, each twin group goes off to “interview” each other.

Questions might include:

How would you spend your last \$10.00? What is 1 item you cannot live without, if you could only listen to 1 song for a year, what would it be?

Twins report out on each other

***Leadership Opportunities:*** Moderator-ensuring that everyone is meeting someone new

## **Identify the Logo**

Group size: Can be played individually or in small groups.

Materials: Printed charts with logos -include popular ones from social media, coffee places, restaurants, stores, schools, businesses

Timer: Optional

Group is given copies of logo chart. The person or group with the most correct answers wins. This game works best without the benefit of the internet.

***Leadership Opportunity:*** Submit logos ahead of time

## Get to Know You Bingo

Group Size: Any

Materials: Bingo sheets with chart filled out with questions and pens

Directions: Meet someone who.... there should be a different person's name in each space.

First one with 5 in a row wins

Rides a Skateboard	2 Dog Owner	3 Cat Owner	Lived in 3 states	Born in another country
Can Play a Musical Instrument	Plays video games	Lifts weights	Plays in a band	Has been on TV
Rides a motorcycle	Can Speak another Language	Free Space	Goes to Work	Goes to Work
Rode the bus in the last year	Had braces	Likes to Read	Called their Congressman or Senator	Left handed
Can whistle	Can rap	Voted Last Presidential Election	Ran for an elected Position	Wrote a Letter to a Newspaper

## **Handshake Circle:**

**Group Size: More than 10**

**Materials: none**

Group stands in circle and the first person starts with a typical handshake, then turns to the next person and shakes their hand adding something extra. Each time a new person shakes hands, another new option is added until the handshake is quite long and elaborate. The handshake is repeated until the circle is complete.

Challenge: Have the first or second person in the circle repeat the ending handshake .