

Additional Warm-Up & Grounding Activities

Although the Lost & Found Curriculum specifies certain suggested activities, you may opt to sub in different ones based on your group's age or needs. Here are some alternatives.

Ice Breakers and Warm-up Activities

Fun mini-games to get to know one another and build a sense of community

One thing I like to do

As children introduce themselves, they say something they like to do, along with a motion for it (e.g. "I like to read," they could say, while miming reading a book). Then the other kids say the name back and do the motion.

Rhyming

Start by introducing yourself and saying a word—"dime" is a good one for older kids. As you go around the circle with introductions, each child comes up with a rhyming word.

Never have I ever

As you introduce yourself, finish the sentence, "Never have I ever. ." Everyone in the group raises their hand if they have done the thing stated. E.g.: "Never have I ever. . .stayed awake all night."

Story weave

Tell a collaborative story on the spot! Each person contributes one sentence of the story, adding onto what's come before.

Scavenger hunt (online only)

The group has 10 seconds to find items in a certain category (e.g. something red, something that begins with a certain letter, something you could use as a hat). They show their items to the camera.

Grounding Exercises

A way to help kids be grounded in the moment, useful when potentially stirring up emotions and memories that cause distress

Lead a grounding exercise at the beginning and end of each session. You should use no more than two different exercises during the four sessions to enable kids to gain a strong familiarity with them.

Stomp, Stomp, Blow

This is a fun, active exercise that younger kids might enjoy. Have them stand and, as a group, stomp their left foot, stomp their right foot, and then exhale deeply. Continue this pattern. Encourage them to feel the floor beneath their feet with each stomp and, as they exhale, blow away any thoughts and feelings that are distressing them.

What do you see?

Pick a category (e.g. things that are green, things that are round) and instruct the children to each look around the room, silently noticing and naming everything that fits into that category. Be sure to reinforce that this is a silent activity, with each person naming things to themselves.

Deep breathing exercises

- » Breathe in and imagine a wave rolling in, breathe out and imagine the wave rolling out.
- » Pretend your belly is a balloon. Breathe in and make the balloon bigger, then breathe out and make the balloon shrink.

Stretching

If everyone in the group is able, do a series of simple stretches. Have the kids bend over and dangle their arms like a rag doll, then reach up to the sky. Bend left and right, and stretch out your "writing wrists."

Engage the senses

Name 5 things you can see, 4 things you can feel, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, 1 thing you can taste.