

Some community building ideas by category (that your staff won't laugh at):

Bonding

Rock Band – You can use the video game and equipment for this or try something completely different and make in an “air rock band” with no real instruments. Divide employees into small groups and have them choose a song and put on a rock show. Each person should vote for the winner determined by whatever criteria is most fitting. Perhaps it is hilarity, costumes, believability, acting, etc.

Trivia Night – Another team bonding activity where groups can be formed to answer trivia questions. Provide coffee and snacks and tailor the trivia questions to fit your workplace. Perhaps make the trivia questions about the employees, the center, education topics, or current events. Make it fun and make it engaging!

Contests – For centers with multiple teachers in each room, create a monthly contest for each classroom to strive for. This can be something simple like a food drive, door decorations, employee attendance, etc. Have a “trophy” of some kind for the winning classroom to showcase when they win. This may be an actual trophy, lunch delivery, lattes, fancy nametags, etc.

Communication

Pairs – One person should write well-known pairs on separate pieces of paper and tape them to people's backs. Next, everyone goes around and tries to find out what is written on their back by asking yes or no questions. Then they will go around and find their counterpart.

Masterpieces – In teams of two give one person a photograph of a drawing and the other person some drawing supplies. The person with the photograph cannot let their teammate see the photo under any circumstances or they are disqualified. Have the team sit back to back while the person with the photograph describes the photo and instructs what the other person must draw. At the end, compare and contrast.

Collaboration

Scavenger Hunt – A good old-fashioned scavenger hunt in your center can help team members show others where things are in their classroom and why they are there. This gives them a goal to meet with a team and opens the metaphorical door to studying other classrooms in a new way.

Mine Sweeper – Use boxes of different shapes and sizes (or similar items) as mines in an empty room set up all over the floor. Separate staff into teams of two where one person is

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blindfolded, and the other person is on the other side of the room guiding their partner through the "mines." If a mine is "detonated," the team is disqualified. Adjust this as necessary to make it simpler or harder for your specific group.

Stereotype Stunt – Divide staff into equal groups. Give them 10 minutes to identify something that they all have in common and to create a list of stereotypes that may come with that. For the remainder of the day (hour, week, etc.) challenge the group to fulfill those stereotypes. For example, one group may be self-proclaimed "book worms" and have a book with them throughout the day. Come together during the next meeting to discuss stereotypes and how that affects the work place.

Problem Solving

Skyscraper – Take a hint from the thousands of STEM programs in the United States and have your team work together to build a skyscraper! Divide staff into groups and give them all equal time and materials to create the tallest skyscraper that they can make. Giving them only the two rules of materials to be used and time to take gives them collaborative freedom and problem-solving potential. At the end of the time you can measure the skyscrapers to find the winning team.

Squared Up – Have a group of four sit together on the floor blindfolded with their backs together. Place a rope that is tied together at both ends around the group and instruct them to form a perfect square. You may wish to then instruct one person not to talk, one person to use their non-dominant hand only, or one person to speak in a foreign language. When the group believes they have accomplished the square they should take their blindfolds off and look at their work. Chances are that they will not have the square they thought they did.