

# Boosters

## What Are Boosters?

Boosters are the gathering activities to build community at the beginning of a program/event and are often fillers, too. Boosters can also be active songs like Dill's GumBoots song. The following is considered a Booster.

The games suggested in this handout were designed for early adolescents and youth.

## The Indoor Rainstorm

Object: To create the sound effects of a rainstorm.

One person in the middle of a circle facilitates the sounds by going around the circle and changing each step. Each step lasts about 15–30 seconds.

Steps to the storm:

1. Begin by snapping your fingers.
2. Then point to the group to start clapping quietly, then louder.
3. Then point to pat their thighs.
4. Then point to stomp their feet.
5. Then point to stomp and pat their thighs. Reverse order of the actions to end the game as if the storm were disappearing.

## Wide Games

Wide Games are intended to build and involve the whole camp community. The following ideas for Wide Games are a compilation from camp directors and youth ministers from across The United Church of Canada.

## Tag Games

- **Hug Tag:** One person is "it" and the others protect themselves from being tagged by hugging each other.

The person who is "it" can stay in one spot for only two seconds. The people who are hugging can stay in one spot for only four seconds. People can only hug in pairs and trios.

- **Blob Tag:** One person is "it." When "it" tags someone, that person becomes part of the blob. The game ends when everyone in the room is part of the blob.
- **Chain Tag:** One person begins as "it." When "it" tags someone, that person becomes part of the chain. The chain breaks in half when it is four people strong. The game ends when everyone is part of a chain.

- **Balloon Tag:** Object: To pop everyone's balloon while protecting your own balloon.

Each person receives a balloon and a six-inch string. They tie the string with the balloon to the lower part of one ankle. When the facilitator says, "Go!" each person tries to pop the other people's balloons while protecting his/her own. Once a person's balloon is popped, that person must move out of the game area.

- **Blindfold Tag:** Object: The blindfolded person must find and tag the other people in the room.

One person, who is "it," is blindfolded and goes through the room searching for people to tag. When "it" tags someone, the tagged person receives a blindfold and also becomes "it." The game ends when everyone is blindfolded.

This game should take place in a room that is not too small and doesn't have too much furniture to walk into or over. Make sure you have a blindfold for every person in the room.

- **Everyone It:** The leaders calls out, "Everyone's it!" Everyone tries to tag everyone else. The last person standing can be "it" for the next game the group plays.

## Who Are You?

Object: To get to know people's names.

Sit in a circle, with one person in the middle. The middle person points to a circle member and asks, "Who are you?" That person responds with her/his name. The middle person then asks that same person, "Who are your neighbours?" The person responds with the names of the people the right and left. If that person doesn't know their names, she/he goes in the middle. If she/he does know their names, the middle person asks, "Who else would you like to know?" The person then says something like, "All those people with white socks on." All the people with white socks on have to move to another seat, and the middle person tries to find a seat. The person who is unable to find a seat goes in the middle and asks all the circle members the questions.

People cannot move to either of the two seats on their left or right.

## People to People

This is a good mixer game.

A large group of people mingles in a designated area. The facilitator has people chant, "People to People" while snapping their fingers (you choose the rhythm). The facilitator then calls out a specific number of people and asks them to answer a question, build something with others, or do an action. For example, the facilitator might say, "Three people make a washing machine." All participants would gather into groups of three and complete the request.

Depending on the time and the facilitator's creativity, the game can go from 5 minutes to half an hour. After a few things have been called out, recall one of the previous requests so people have to remember and find the same group they originally did that request with.

Some suggestions:

- Build something: build a shower 3 people, car 5 people, airplane 10 people, skateboard factory 15 people, working McDonald's 20 people, roller coaster using the whole group
- Actions: group of 4 make a commercial for your church (1 minute), group of 5 make a song or chant about this camp
- "Favourite" type of question: favourite movie, actor, food, etc. I am feeling..., If I had a million dollars I would want....

People must stay in the groups in which they first built something. For example, you go back to the same five people who created the car with you.

## **Zip, Zap, Zoom**

This is a quick name game.

The group forms a circle with one person in the middle. The person in the middle points to a person in the circle and says Zip, Zap, or Zoom. Zip means the person to your right. Zap means the person to your left. Zoom means you. If the middle person counts to 10 before you can say the name, then the person pointed to goes in the middle. If the person pointed to says the name before the person in the middle finishes counting to 10, then the middle person tries again.

## **You're Special If...**

Everyone has a seat and the person in the middle says, "You're special if..." The sentence must describe people in the group. For example, a person can call out, "You're special if you have white socks on!" Then all the people with white socks must move to another seat while the person in the middle tries to take a seat. If the person in the middle finds a seat, then the person who is unable to find a seat becomes the new caller in the middle.

Rules: The Ifs cannot be sexually explicit or race- or gender-based.

## **North Wind Blows**

This game is similar to You're Special If except that the person in the middle says "The North Wind Blows."

## **You're a... (Whale, Elephant, Monkey, Chicken)**

Object: To get people to do the actions in 10 seconds.

The group forms a circle with a person in the middle. The middle person then points to a person in the circle and says, "You're a...." The person pointed to and the people on the right and left of that person must do the action before the person in the middle counts to

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"Boosters: What's a Booster?" Downloaded from [www.united-church.ca/exploring/camping](http://www.united-church.ca/exploring/camping).

10. For example, if the person in the middle says "You're a whale," the person pointed at blows in the air for a spout and the people on the right and left move their arms for fins. If either one of these three people cannot do the action, then that person goes in the middle.

It is recommended that you begin the game with only three animals and add more as the game continues.

## Wave

People sit in a circle of chairs with one chair empty. A person in the middle stands at the opposite side of the circle from the empty chair. The game begins with the facilitator saying, "Go!" All the people on the chairs must move clockwise into the empty chair beside them. The person in the middle tries to get into the empty chair. When "Switch" is called, the direction of the circle changes.

People must have one full bum cheek on the chair for at least one second between each switch!

## Link

People pair off by linking arms and forming a large circle in a room. Two people are in the middle: the person who is "it" and the runner. "It" runs after the runner and tries to tag him/her. If "it" manages to tag the runner, then the runner becomes "it." If the runner joins the end of a linked pair, then the person at the opposite end of the pair becomes the runner.

If the runner goes outside the circle, then he/she becomes "it." The circle goes in a clockwise direction. The runner must join the linked pair on the right-hand side. If the runner joins the wrong side, then he/she is "it." If you are a new runner, you cannot join the two closest pairs on your left or right.

## Rumours

Object: To guess the person who started the rumour.

Form a large circle on the floor or in chairs. One person goes outside the room. The circle then brainstorms common information or makes up something about the person outside. The group then mixes itself up. Everyone then passes one rumour about the outside person to the person on her/his right. After all the rumours have been shared, the circle is mixed up again.

The outside person is called back into the room and goes to the middle of the circle. The person asks, "What have you heard about me?" to a circle member. The circle member answers with, "I have heard..." The middle person now moves to another circle member she/he suspects started the previous rumour and asks, "Did you say that about me?" If the circle member did not start the rumour, then she/he responds with, "No, I didn't say that about you, but I did hear that you..." If the circle member did say it, then she/he responds with, "Yes" and becomes the next person to leave the room.

Rumours are to be fun for the person doing the asking; they should not be at the person's expense.

### **Four on the Couch**

Object: To get all of one colour on the couch.

Begin by dividing into two equal-size groups (or more groups, depending on how much time you have and the number of people playing). Give each group a colour. All the people put their names on a small piece of paper and put these in a bowl and mix them up. Each member then takes a name from the bowl. It doesn't matter if they get their own. The circle should include four spots for the couch area and one empty spot. The person to the right of the empty spots says a name. The person with the name of the paper moves to the empty spot and changes names with the person who called out their paper name. The game continues until all of one colour is on the couch.

### **What Do They Have?**

Object: To guess what the group has.

A person from the circle leaves the room. The rest of the group brainstorms a strange disease (the more creative the better) or an action. When the person who left the room returns, she/he tries to guess what the group has. The person can ask questions, but the members of the group can give only yes or no answers. The game ends when the person in the middle guesses what the group has.

### **Animal Game**

Object: To reach the Lion's seat.

Form a circle. Each person's chair is assigned an animal and the animal's action. For example, the starting chair is the Lion, since he/she reigns over the jungle. The Lion's noise is a roar and an action accompanies that sound. The lowest chair is the Amoeba, who says, "Blub blub" and whose action is to go limp. Animals can include monkey, person, moose, sheep, roadrunner, bear, worm, snake, frog, turtle, and alligator. It's fun to brainstorm with the group to choose their own animal at the start.

The Lion begins each round with a ROAR and his/her action, followed by another animal and their sound and action, such as a Person who says "Wow" and twirls their index finger. When your animal is called, your response must begin with your animal sound and its action, followed by another animal and its action. If a person is too slow doing their action or does the wrong action, then that person must go to the bottom chair, the Amoeba. Everyone else before that animal now moves up to another animal.

### **Wink Game**

People pair off and move to a circle. The circle should have enough chairs for half the group, plus one empty chair. One group sits on the chairs in a circle and the other group stands behind the chairs. There should be one empty chair with one person behind it.

The person with the empty chair winks to the people in chairs. When a person is winked at, she/he tries to move into the empty chair. If the person behind her/him touches their shoulder with both hands, then she/he must stay.

People behind the chairs must have their hands behind their backs, and people in the chairs must have both shoulder blades touching the chairs before each wink.

## Hand Game

Have everyone lie in a circle on the floor (grass, sand...). Now have everyone put their right arm over their neighbour's left (right over left). The game begins with everyone's hands in a circle.

The leader explains that the game goes clockwise by each hand making one tap. When a person taps twice, then that action changes the direction of the game. When a person taps three times, then that action skips one hand. Hands are eliminated from the game by hand mistakes or by taking too long to tap.

It is good idea to practise a few rounds first before trying to eliminate hands. This is a fun game, and the focus should be on the game and silly hand actions, not on the elimination.

## I Have Never...

This is a good get-to-know-you game for small groups.

The group sits in a circle with a large bowl in the middle. Each person in the group receives 10 stirricks or toothpicks. The leader has someone begin the game. This person can say things such as, "I have never gone horseback riding" or "I have never played Playstation" or "I have never read *The Cat in the Hat*." All the people in the group that *have* done the "I have never..." must put a stick in the bowl. If anyone feels that the person saying "I have never..." has lied, then he/she must prove that the person has done the action by making a simple appeal to the group.

The "I have never..." cannot be sexually explicit!

## If They Were... They Would Be...

Object: To find the identity of the person being talked about. This is a good get-to-know-you game for small groups.

Form an informal group. One person chooses another person in the group. The rest of the group then asks questions, such as "If they were a river, which one would they be?" Answer: "They would be the Congo River." Q: "If they were a mountain, which one would they be?" A: "I would be Mt. Everest," and so on.

After the entire group has asked the questions, they are all allowed one guess at who the person was. When everyone in the group has guessed, the person tells the group who it was. The game continues with the person who was being talked about choosing the next person in the room.