

Breaking Boundaries Prompt Cards

**BREAKING
BOUNDARIES**



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Breaking Boundaries connects young people, their families and communities together through regular engagement in sport and physical activity, fostering mutual respect and friendships by playing, spectating and volunteering. It is being delivered in five cities: Bradford, Birmingham, London (Barking and Dagenham), Manchester and Slough.

The project uses sport as a tool to improve:



Social connectedness and attitudes to diversity



Partnership working



Community participation and sense of belonging



Empowerment and community voice



Wellbeing



Knowledge and skills that support community cohesion

How can you use these cards to increase the impact of the Breaking Boundaries project?

- ≡ Breaking Boundaries connects people together, especially people from different communities who may not have much contact in everyday life.
- ≡ These cards provide you with suggestions, guidance and practical activities that you can build into your sessions to make these connections more frequent, more positive and more meaningful.
- ≡ There are twelve activity cards in total, to match the twelve sessions that you are running as part of the Breaking Boundaries project.
- ≡ Social mixing is like sport. Some people pick it up quicker than others. Keep this in mind when you're encouraging people to mix. Perhaps some people could start with a 'buddy' so that they always have someone they trust to work with. They might feel happier joining a new or mixed group if their buddy is with them. A buddy system can help people who face extra challenges around language and communication.

How do I use these cards in one of my sessions?

Each card has three types of activity:

- ≡ **Ice-breakers and Energisers:** activities to make people feel safe and comfortable at the start of a session, to 'raise the temperature' of the room, to make them feel livelier and more dynamic, and to build trust and confidence.
- ≡ **Grouping games:** to organise people in different ways to increase social mixing during your sport sessions.
- ≡ **Conversation starters:** prompts to encourage people to build their understanding of different cultures and traditions.
- ≡ You can select the ones that best fit with the type of session you're running and the needs of the group at the time.
- ≡ Some of the activities require physical contact, and not every member of the group will always be comfortable with that. The best thing to do is to check with people before you introduce it.



Facilitating conversations and discussions

Tips and tools:

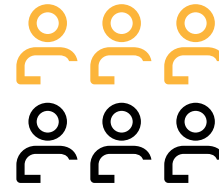
- ≡ Try to set aside some dedicated time for people to mix socially and have conversations. 15-20 minutes at the end of a sport or activity session is ideal. Provide some snacks and drinks in the first couple of weeks then perhaps ask people to volunteer to bring some things along to share with the whole group.
- ≡ Use the themes and prompts as suggestions, but remember that you're trying to increase social mixing, so if people go 'off-topic' but are still socialising and building relationships, that's absolutely fine.
- ≡ Some people will never feel comfortable talking in front of a large group, and that's fine, too. Don't force or pressure people into talking if they're not ready.
- ≡ Some people might be happier writing their thoughts down on a post-it for someone else to read out. You could create an 'idea wall' to make this possible.
- ≡ Try starting conversations off in small groups of 3,4 or 5. You can then ask one person to speak on behalf of their small group in front of the larger group.
- ≡ Sometimes there are a few people who tend to take over in group discussions. If this happens in your group, you could try something like a one-minute timer for every individual contribution.
- ≡ If you're starting with small groups, use lots of different grouping games to mix people up over the course of the twelve weekly sessions. Ideally, by the end, everyone will feel comfortable and confident talking to everyone else, but this isn't always easy or straightforward.
- ≡ Use the sport sessions themselves as a conversation starter. Ask questions like: 'What did you enjoy most about this week's session?' and 'What would you like to do next time?' before moving on to more challenging questions like 'Who impressed you the most today and why?' and 'What positive thing did you learn about yourself today?'

SESSION 1



ICE-BREAKERS AND ENERGISERS:

- Ask everyone to make a name badge: the name they wish to be called and a drawing of something that reflects them, e.g. something they like, something they've achieved, aspect of their personality, belief etc.
- Play some music and ask the group to move around the room. When the music stops, find the nearest person, say hello and learn their name.
- Restart the music and travel around as a pair. When the music stops, find a new pair and introduce your partner to the new pair. "Hello, this is..." Restart music and move off again in your pair.
- You can add extra layers to this activity by asking each participant to share something with their new partner – something they like, something they're looking forward to, something they're nervous about, for example. They can use this when they introduce them. "Hello, this is..., and they're looking forward to..."



GROUPING GAMES:

- It's worth investing in a set of plastic or wooden ice-lolly sticks. On the sticks you can use four different categories for dividing whole groups up into different numbers of teams.
- For example: Use six different colours on one end/side of the sticks for 6 teams.
- Write the names of five different famous people on one end/side of the stick for 5 teams.
- For teams of 3, write numbers on one end/side of the stick, making sure you have three of each number in total.
 - Write North, South, East and West on the last end/side for 4 teams.

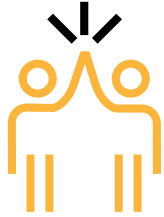


CONVERSATION STARTERS:

Theme: New people and new environments

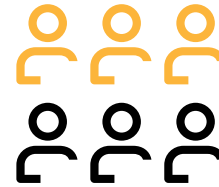
- "How much have you enjoyed today's first session?"
 - "Was there anything you were worried about before you came?"
 - "Have we helped you with your worries?"
 - "Is there anything else we can do?"
- "Hopefully, you've met some new people today. What has been the nicest surprise about this group of people?"

SESSION 2



ICE-BREAKERS AND ENERGISERS:

- You will need 2-3 easy to catch balls.
- This is a great way of learning names as a group.
- Form a standing circle. Say your name out loud and pass the ball to someone else. If they don't do the same, start again and pass to a different person until they realise that they should say their name then pass the ball on. When everyone understands what to do, stop the game.
- Say the name of another person and pass the ball to them. They should say the name of another person and pass them the ball.
- Lastly, say the name of someone else, pass them the ball and put your hands on your head. Nobody may pass the ball to someone with their hands on their head. The game ends when everyone has been passed the ball.
- If you want, you can introduce an extra ball or two.



GROUPING GAMES:

- You need a bag of small balloons of mixed colours.
- Take one balloon for each person. If you need four teams, choose four different colours.
- Put the balloons on the floor around the space and ask everyone to find one and pick it up. Now, they need to find all the other people with the same colour balloon and form a group.
- Then ask the team to work together to blow up and tie all the balloons. The first team to inflate all their balloons wins.
- You can hand the balloons out at the start if you want to make sure certain people are together or not together.



CONVERSATION STARTERS:

Theme: What's in a name?

- Start this session off in groups of 3 or 4.
- Does anyone in each group have an interesting story about the meaning of their name or how/why they were given the name they have?
- Has anyone faced any difficulties because of their name? (Perhaps people mispronounce it or perhaps they've been teased or discriminated against).

Share some stories with the whole group, then ask the whole group the following question:

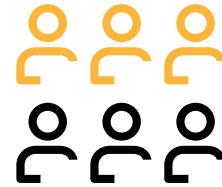
- What is one thing we could all do as a group to ensure that everyone here is able to feel proud of their name? (Hopefully, people will suggest that everyone learns everyone else's chosen name, including how to pronounce them correctly – if they don't, you can suggest it).

SESSION 3



ICE-BREAKERS AND ENERGISERS:

- Sit everyone in a circle. Go around the group naming everyone as one of three different things, such as fruits – peach, pear, pineapple.
- Call out the name of one of the fruits – everyone with that name must get up and change places with another person.
 - Call out two fruits at once to add to the activity.
 - Call fruit salad and everyone must change seats.



GROUPING GAMES:

To split a group into 4 teams:

- Stand in a circle, facing in.
- Ask everyone to fold their arms.
- Divide the group into right arm on top and left arm on top. Right stand to the right, left to the left.
- Now ask everyone to clasp their hands together in front of them.
- You now have four teams – right arm, right thumb; right arm, left thumb; left arm, left thumb; and left arm, right thumb.



CONVERSATION STARTERS:

Theme: Food and drink

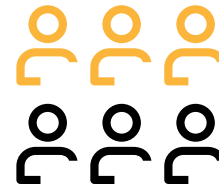
- Start in small groups of 3-4.
- “If you could only eat one thing for the rest of your life, what would it be?”
- “What is your favourite memory about food from your childhood?” “Food is important in every culture and society. What is the most special or important meal in your family’s year? What do you eat? Is there a story behind it?”
 - What are some foods that people from your community eat?
 - Do you have a special requirements, such as fasting periods?

SESSION 4



ICE-BREAKERS AND ENERGISERS:

- Get everyone to find a partner. Make sure that nobody is left out. You can be the extra person if needed.
- The pairs have three minutes to find five things they have in common with one another. Ask for some examples of what the pairs have in common.
- Each pair should find another pair. They have one more minute to find one thing that all four of them have in common.
- You can continue this game for as long as you want until the whole group are all together, trying to find one thing they all have in common.



GROUPING GAMES:

- People can start with a 'buddy' or on their own.
- Call out a number from 2-8: people must get into groups of that size as quickly as they can. If you want, there can be a small 'forfeit' for the last group to form.
- If you make the last number '4', you can then go into the ice-breaker activity below.
- You could use the activity to teach people numbers in different languages spoken by the group.



CONVERSATION STARTERS:

Theme: What do we have in common?

- Start the session in small groups of 3-4.
- "Was anyone surprised to find out today that they had things in common with someone who seemed very different to them?"
- "Are there hopes or ambitions that all people, regardless of their background, share?"

Share some ideas and then ask the following question to the whole group:

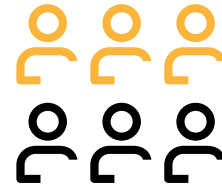
- "Could we come up with a list of goals that we all share for these sessions?"
- "Could we also create a short list of things we all need to do to make this possible?"
- Hopefully, this will give everyone a shared vision for the sessions and a shared way of behaving towards one another.
- This will underline the things that everyone has in common in the group, regardless of their background.

SESSION 5



ICE-BREAKERS AND ENERGISERS:

- You will need up to 3 hula hoops.
- Someone is given a hula hoop. The group form a large circle and hold hands. The group must pass the hoop around the circle without breaking their hold on one another.
- It can be done as a race between two or three smaller groups or you can add an extra hoop or two as the whole group gets better.
 - Randomly use.



GROUPING GAMES:

- Ask everyone in the group to think of a number between one and one thousand. On the word 'go', everyone must line up in order according to their number. If you meet someone with the same number as you, both must think of a new number and find their place in the line.
- Use this line to divide people into teams or groups of any size. For example, the first four in the line are team 1, the next four people are team 2...
- You can use almost anything instead of a random number – the number at the start of your address, the day and month you were born, the first letter of a word to describe how you're feeling.
- Avoid age order, height order and first letter of names as these tend to be less effective at mixing people up.



CONVERSATION STARTERS:

Theme: Communicating with different people

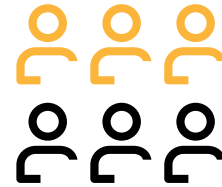
- “Think about those ice-breaker and energiser games that we played. What made communication difficult? Was it pressure of time, or poor listening or everyone talking at once, for example?”
- “When you were successful, what types of things did you do differently as a group?” “What can we do to make sure that everyone feels able to contribute and feel heard in this group?”
- “Are there any special objects or symbols that are special to your community?”

SESSION 6



ICE-BREAKERS AND ENERGISERS:

- On a Power point slide or on a flipchart write the numbers 1 to 5 several times.
- Mix them up e. g. 1, 3, 4, 5, 2, 3, 2, 4, 1, 5, and so on.
 - Give everyone a number from 1 to 5.
- Ask them to read out the numbers together as they appear on the slide or flipchart.
 - Next time ask them all to read them out together but whenever they read out their particular number they must stand up and sit down.
- This can be repeated several times increasing the speed at which they read and must complete the action.
- You could use this to begin to learn some numbers in different languages spoken by people in the group.



GROUPING GAMES:

- Before you start the activity, identify 3 or 4 features of the group like 'white t-shirts', Nike trainers, spectacles, shorts, sweatshirts, headgear.
- On 'go' the group must form teams that have all of these features. People who have none of these features can be brought into any team.
- You might get teams containing different numbers of people playing this activity.



CONVERSATION STARTERS:

Theme: New languages

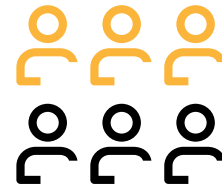
- Ask everyone to write down all the languages they can speak, each one on a different post-it note. Put all the notes on a wall or flipchart. Work out how many different languages the group speaks between them.
 - "Did anyone learn to say anything in a new language today?"
- "If people could learn one completely new language, what would they choose and why?"
- "Do you use a different language in any special ceremonies or prayers in your communities?"

SESSION 7



ICE-BREAKERS AND ENERGISERS:

- The week before, ask all participants to choose a small household item that they can hold easily in one hand and bring it with them for this week's session.
- Place the objects all around the space and bring everyone into the middle. On 'go', everyone finds an object at random and must then think of a way in which they are similar to the object. For example, a pencil is sharp and to the point.
 - Take it in turns to say what you chose and how it is similar to you.
- As a development, you could ask people to choose an object and describe the positive ways in which it is similar to another person in the group so as to strengthen relationships.



GROUPING GAMES:

- Before the session, make up some cards that have famous pairs on them, such as Romeo and Juliet, Fish and Chips, Left and Right. On the back of each card write a number, for example, from 1-4. Make sure the pairs share the same number.
- Give everyone a card and ask them to find their 'partner'. Then, they use the back of the card to find all the other people with their number to form a team.



CONVERSATION STARTERS:

Theme: Listening to other people

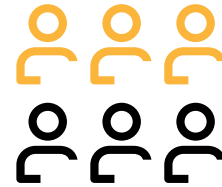
- "Can anyone remember a great example of how a person used the object they chose to describe themselves or another person?"
- "What great examples have you seen of one person in this group making a real effort to listen carefully to someone else?"
- "How does someone show you that they're really listening to what you have to say?"

SESSION 8



ICE-BREAKERS AND ENERGISERS:

- You will need a ball of wool.
 - Sit in a circle.
- Using the ball of wool, the first person says their name and something about themselves.
- They then toss the wool to someone else remembering to hold onto the end.
- The next person does the same, trying to link what they say to the previous person in some way.
- They hold onto the loose part of the wool too before passing the ball on.
- When everyone has spoken there will be a large web that shows how everyone is connected together.



GROUPING GAMES:

- You will need to print off several sporting pictures on A4 paper (one for each team you'd like to have).
- Cut the pictures up into pieces. For example, if you want 4 teams and you have 20 people in your group, cut each picture into 5 pieces.
- Hand out the pieces to the group randomly. Ask people to find everyone else with pieces of the same picture.
- See which team can be the first to complete their jigsaw.



CONVERSATION STARTERS:

Theme: Making connections

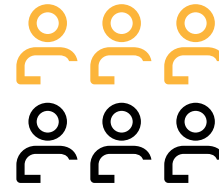
- “We’re more than halfway through our twelve sessions now, and hopefully we’re all feeling more confident and comfortable with our place in the group. Think about the ball of wool game earlier. Was anyone pleasantly surprised by a connection they had with someone else in the group?”
- “How have the connections we’re making helped us to learn more about the different people and communities represented here?”
- “Have we learned anything about some of the faiths and beliefs that might be represented here, such as similar or different religious ceremonies, for example?”

SESSION 9



ICE-BREAKERS AND ENERGISERS:

- Find a partner. Person A says '1', person B says '2', person A says '3', person B says '4', person A says '5', person B says '1' and so on...
 - Play for one minute then find a new partner.
 - Replace '1' with a hand clap.
 - Play with a new partner. Replace '2' with touching both knees.
 - Play with a new partner. Replace '3' with a jump.
 - Play with a new partner. Replace '4' with touching your head with both hands.
 - Play with a new partner. Replace '5' with an action that the pair invents themselves.
 - You can either use each action separately or build the actions one at a time until all of the numbers are replaced.



GROUPING GAMES:

- Ask everyone to stand in the centre of the room.
- Tell them you're going to say two words and point left and right as you say them. Without thinking they should decide which they prefer and go that way.
- For example, sweet and salty, hot and cold, city or country.
- Now that you have two groups, you can use another pair of words to easily divide them into 4 and then 8 if you need to.



CONVERSATION STARTERS:

Theme: Feeling part of a community

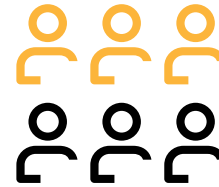
- Start in small groups.
- "How does this group feel different to when we first started?"
- "What have we done well as a whole group to make everyone feel part of it?"
 - Share some ideas and examples.
- "What else can we do as a group to become even more of a team or community?"
 - "Are there some special days or festivals from our different communities that we could celebrate together?"

SESSION 10



ICE-BREAKERS AND ENERGISERS:

- You will need a tennis ball, beach ball and balloon and a large towel for every four people in the group.
- Use a grouping game to get people into fours.
 - Give each four a towel.
- How many times can the whole group pass the ball around the space using their towels to throw and catch it?
- You can make it harder by using a smaller ball and easier by using a balloon.



GROUPING GAMES:

- You will need some small coloured sticky dots or post-its – one colour per team.
- This type of game allows you to deliberately mix people to get the type of groups you're aiming for.
- Sit everyone in a circle and, with their permission, put a sticker on their shoulder or back.
- Each person must find the other people with their coloured dot to form a team. It requires them to collaborate more than they think, especially at the beginning when nobody knows their own colour.

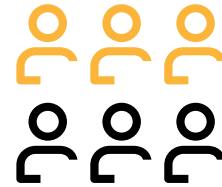


CONVERSATION STARTERS:

Theme: Understanding one another

- “We’re a diverse group of people and while we’ve found lots in common, there might still be things we don’t know about one another’s communities, cultures and customs. If you have a question about something from someone else’s community, write it down on a post-it note and put it on the chart.”
- Choose some interesting and helpful questions and ask if anyone can answer it for the whole group.
- “If there was one thing, you’d want people to understand about your culture or beliefs or history, what might it be?”

SESSION 11



ICE-BREAKERS AND ENERGISERS:

- Gather the group in a large open space.
- The objective is to create one large circle in which every person is linked with two others.
- Ask one volunteer to stand with one hand on their hip, and then share one or more statements about themselves to the group.
- When someone from the rest of the group hears a statement that they have in common with the first volunteer, they are invited to link elbows with them. (Or just stand next to one another if contact is a problem)
- This second person then shares something about themselves to the group, to attract a new person to link elbows with them, and so on.
- To complete the circle, invite the last person to share something about themselves to link with the first volunteer.

GROUPING GAMES:

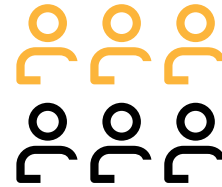
- Whole body rock, paper, scissors
 - Show the whole group a whole-body action for each of rock, paper and scissors
 - Find a partner and have a few practice games
 - Move on to a new person and play them – the 'loser' joins the 'winner'. Together, they choose what they will be and play another pair. 'Losing' pair joins 'winning' pair as a four to play another four. Keep playing until the group is divided into as many teams as you need
- OR:
- 'Winners' from the first game go to one end of the room, 'losers' to the other.
 - Winners play a new winner, - losers play a new loser. This quickly divides the whole group into four teams.

CONVERSATION STARTERS:

Theme: What have we learned about each other?

- Split the group into 3's and number people 1-3.
- "What's the most interesting thing you've learned about a different culture or community while you've been here?"
- In their groups, give person 1 a few minutes to think about something they've seen and admired in person 2. Person 2 will do the same for person 3 and person 3 will do the same for person 1.
- After they've shared in 3's, ask if anyone would share with the whole group (check the person receiving the compliment is happy).
- As coach, give your own thoughts and examples of what's impressed you the most about the group as a whole.

SESSION 12



ICE-BREAKERS AND ENERGISERS:

- Form a circle.
- Challenge the group to record the fastest contagious smile ever!
- Start your timer and pass a big smile as you make eye contact with someone across the circle from you.
- Once this person smiles at you, start gently jumping up and down to indicate that the first smile has been sent.
- The person who received your smile, now passes a smile to a new person in the circle.
- The process of passing smiles continues until everyone in the circle has received a smile and passed a smile.
 - When everyone is jumping on the spot, stop the time.
- Play for two or more rounds attempting to record the fastest contagious smile ever.

GROUPING GAMES:

- You will need some pieces of string or wool about 20cm long – half as many pieces as there are people in the group.
- Hold the pieces of string around the middle in your fist. Ask everyone to take one end of a piece of string in their fingertips. Take your hand away and everyone should have a partner.
- Take half the number of pieces of string and repeat, with the partners both holding the same end of the same piece of string. This will make teams of four.
 - You can repeat again to make teams of eight.

CONVERSATION STARTERS:

Theme: What do you hope for next?

- “What are you going to do differently having been part of this group for 12 weeks? Are you going to be more active, are you going to stay connected with some new people, for example?”
- “Would you like the group to stay in contact somehow? What might this look like? A celebration event? A regular sport session?”
- “What’s been the best thing about the past 12 weeks?”

Youth Sport Trust

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