

## Community Builders

A community builder is vital to any Keystone meeting—it brings the group together, gets people to connect, and sets a fun mood for the rest of the time together.

- Use one of the first four activities when members are still getting to know each other.
- Read over instructions *before* the meeting. Allow time for anything you need to do in advance.
- Set a timer for how much time the activity should take (usually five minutes).
- If an activity calls for forming pairs or teams, do that *before* giving directions.
- Never force anyone to participate. Keystoneers can say “pass” or “Come back to me.”
- Offer an alternative to physical movement (for example, if there’s jumping, a player could remain seated and raise their hands). Activities with physical movement are marked with a star (\*).
- Be patient if people don’t get the instructions right away. Give them time to learn.
- Make sure *you’re* excited about the community builder, and others will be too.

### Who Am I?

#### Materials:

- Paper, pens/pencils

#### Preparation:

- Choose the category of personal facts you want to use (you can choose one of the following categories or come up with your own idea):
  - ✓ three fun facts people don’t know about you
  - ✓ three things you wanted to be when you were little
  - ✓ three favorite foods

#### Instructions:

- Give Keystoneers paper and a pen/pencil.
- Announce the category you chose earlier.
- Ask each player to write down three things about themselves in that category.
- Encourage them to be creative and list things that are fun.
- Gather the papers.
- Redistribute the papers to Keystoneers, making sure no one has their own paper.
- Each Keystoneer reads aloud the list, one at a time.
- Others guess who the person is.

### The Name Game

#### Materials:

- None

#### Preparation:

- None

#### Instructions:

- Keystoneers mingle and talk to each other for three minutes.
- They try to learn as many middle names of the others in the group as they can.
- After three minutes, you call “stop.”
- The one who has remembered the most middle names wins.

### Three's a Crowd

**Materials:**

- None

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Keystoneers form teams of three.
- Players find three things they have in common (for example: their favorite holiday, season of the year, hobby or interest, phone app, movie or book).
- One person then introduces the team to the other Keystoneers and shares the three things they have in common.

### My Other Life

**Materials:**

- None

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Keystoneers introduce themselves to each other as the characters they would be if they were not who they are.
- They can choose a character from a book or movie or a favorite superhero—anyone who inspires them.
- They say why they would like to be this character.
- After sharing their characters, they say their real names.

### Change It Up!

**Materials:**

- None

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Keystoneers get into pairs.
- Each player observes their partner's appearance.
- Players turn around, back-to-back, and make three changes (for example: mess up their hair, take off a shoe, untuck their shirt, take their arm out of a sleeve).
- Partners face each other again, and each has to identify the changes made by the other person.

### What's My Name?

**Materials:**

- Blindfold

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- One player is blindfolded and stands in front of the group.
- Others take turns trying to disguise their voices and say a phrase like "Hey there, what's my name?"
- The blindfolded player tries to guess who it is.
- If they guess the right person, they keep going.
- If not, the one who disguised their voice takes their place.
- The player who recognizes the most voices is the winner.

### Clumps\*

**Materials:**

- None

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Keystoners get into pairs.
- Each pair sits on the ground with their partner, backs together and arms linked.
- Pairs try to stand up together.
- Once all pairs have stood up, two pairs (four people) sit together on the ground with backs together and arms linked, and they try to stand up together.
- After they stand, they add another two people and try again.
- Add pairs until the whole group is trying to stand together.

### Word Chain

**Materials:**

- None

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Keystoners sit in a circle.
- The first player starts with any word he or she wants (for example: “blue”).
- The next player repeats the word and then adds another that links to the first (such as “ocean”).
- The next person repeats the previous word and adds another word link (such as “swimmer”).
- The next player repeats that word and adds something else (such as “athlete”), and so on.
- To keep the game moving, allow only a few seconds for each word. Players who take too long or repeat a word are out.

### Can I Come In?\*

**Materials:**

- None

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Keystoners form a circle with one person in the middle.
- That person goes around the circle asking, “Can I come in?”
- At the same time, others in the circle use non-verbal clues to signal to each other and then run and switch places while the person in the middle isn’t looking.
- The one in the middle tries to catch two people switching and move into an empty spot.
- If they are successful, someone else is left in the middle to ask, “Can I come in?”

### No Laughing Allowed

**Materials:**

- None

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Keystoneers get in pairs and stand back-to-back.
- On the count of three, everyone faces their partners, looks each other in the eye and tries to frown, without talking.
- The first to smile or laugh is out.
- All who remain standing take a new partner and the activity continues until two people are left.
- If both of these players are able to keep a straight face, the remaining players can form two teams to help one player heckle and break down the other player.

### Human Knot\*

**Materials:**

- None

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Keystoneers get into small teams.
- Each team forms a circle, standing and facing each other.
- Everyone extends their hands into the circle.
- Intermingling their arms, they grasp hands with other members of the team.
- They should be sure that the two hands they are holding do not belong to the same person.
- Teammates try to untie the knot without releasing hands.
- Team members have to climb over, under, or through each other's arms to untie the knot of bodies.

### Song Scramble

**Materials:**

- Index cards, pen/pencil

**Preparation:**

- Download the lyrics from a popular song.
- Write each line from the song on a separate card.

**Instructions:**

- Start the game by scattering the cards on the ground.
- Each player will pick up one card.
- Players will take turns picking up one card at a time until all the cards are distributed.
- Players must put together the song lyrics in the right order.
- After they correctly assemble the song, players sing it.

### Web of Questions\*

**Materials:**

- Flip chart or white board, markers
- Ball of yarn or string

**Preparation:**

- Write these questions so all can see:
  - ✓ What is your favorite song right now?
  - ✓ If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?
  - ✓ What one thing would you save if your house were burning?
  - ✓ What would be your dream concert?
  - ✓ What is your favorite movie ever?

**Instructions:**

- Keystoners form a circle.
- Using a ball of yarn or string, one player holds on to one end and throws the ball to someone.
- They then choose one question from the list to ask the person receiving the ball.
- That person answers the question, throws the ball to another player and asks a question (the same or a different one).
- Players continue to throw the ball and ask questions until a web is created with the yarn/string.
- Players have fun trying to untangle the web.

### Art Collector

**Materials:**

- Paper, pens/pencils

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Each Keystoner has two minutes to draw a picture or sketch that conveys who he or she is without writing any words.
- At the end of two minutes, collect the pictures.
- Show them to the group one at a time.
- Have members try to guess who drew the picture.
- The person who guesses the most correctly gets to be the "Master Art Collector!"

### Airplane Caper

**Materials:**

- Paper

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Keystoners form two teams.
- Team members stand on opposite sides of the room.
- They use the paper to make airplanes.
- When finished, each team throws their airplane to Keystoners on the opposite sides.
- Each team's players try to catch the airplanes so they do not hit the floor.

### Paper Crazy

**Materials:**

- Several copies of the same newspaper

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Keystoners form into teams of three.
- Give each group a copy of the same newspaper.
- Ask them to spread the newspaper out and listen as you describe a specific ad, article, fact, or picture from the paper.
- When teams find what you're describing, they rip it out and bring it to you.
- The first team to bring the correct item gets a point.
- Continue to describe and call out items.
- The team with the most points wins.

### Mix and Meet

**Materials:**

- M&Ms

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Give each Keystoner a handful of M&Ms.
- Tell them what the different colors mean:
  - ✓ Blue = family
  - ✓ Green = school
  - ✓ Yellow = friends
  - ✓ Red = hobbies
  - ✓ Brown = music/movies
- Players have to look at the M&Ms in their hands and say one fact about themselves for each M&M.
- For example, if they have three blue M&Ms, they would have to say three facts about their family.
- Players take turns saying facts until everyone has shared.

### Living Sculpture

**Materials:**

- Toilet paper, aluminum foil, paper, leaves, straws, paper plates, or other small items that can be used to make the sculpture
- Tape

**Preparation:**

- Gather materials and put them in the meeting room.

**Instructions:**

- Keystoners form several small teams.
- Show them the materials you have gathered.
- Team members turn one person from their team into a living sculpture using only the materials provided.

### Snowball Fight\*

**Materials:**

- Paper, pens/pencils

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Give each Keystoner a piece of paper and a pen/pencil.
- Ask them to write three facts about themselves on the paper.
- Once they have finished, ask them to scrunch up the paper into a “snowball.”
- Tell them to throw the paper “snowballs” at each other from across the room.
- You call out “stop,” and each Keystoner picks up the nearest “snowball.”
- They un-scrunch the paper and read aloud the three interesting facts.
- Players try to identify the person who wrote the facts.

### Speed Talking\*

**Materials:**

- Bell, buzzer or cell-phone alarm

**Preparation:**

- Set up chairs in two circles—a small circle and a larger circle outside of it.
- Make sure chairs are facing each other and there is the same number in the inside circle as the outside circle.
- Decide on the questions to use. They can be anything you want, but here are some ideas:
  - ✓ What’s your most embarrassing moment?
  - ✓ What’s your favorite food?
  - ✓ What do you want to be when you grow up?
  - ✓ Who do you look up to the most?
  - ✓ What’s your best childhood memory?

**Instructions:**

- Players sit in the two circles facing each other.
- They have 30 seconds to answer a question you ask.
- Ring a bell, buzzer or alarm after 30 seconds.
- Players on the inner circle move to the right so they are facing a new partner.
- Once players have met everyone in the circle, ask a new question.
- This time, players on the outside circle move to the right after answering.

### Spot the Difference

**Materials:**

- None

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Keystoneers form two teams and stand in two lines facing each other.
- The first group will be the observers, and they will have two minutes to look at the appearance of their partners.
- You call time, and the observers leave the room.
- Members of the first team will change ten things about their appearance.
- They must be noticeable things, things in view that can be seen by the observers.
- The observers return, and they again observe the first group.
- They have two minutes to guess what ten things have changed.

### The Chair Game\*

**Materials:**

- None

**Preparation:**

- Arrange chairs in a big circle.

**Instructions:**

- Ask Keystoneers to sit in the chairs, except for one person, who will stand in the middle of the circle.
- The person standing in the middle begins by naming an activity (for example: everyone who ate cereal for breakfast).
- All those who ate cereal for breakfast get up and swap seats.
- They cannot move to seats directly on either side of them.
- The person in the middle rushes to find an empty seat, so someone different is left standing.
- That person makes their own statement, causing people to move and find a seat.

### Walk this Way!\*

**Materials:**

- Music, boombox or laptop to play music

**Preparation:**

- Get the music ready to play.

**Instructions:**

- Keystoneers form two teams and stand in two lines facing each other.
- There should be enough space between the lines to make a path for someone to walk through.
- One at a time, players will walk and dance from one end of the line to the other.
- Each player must walk or dance in a different way from previous players (the sillier the better).



### Hit the Mark\*

**Materials:**

- Large piece of poster paper, markers
- Tape

**Preparation:**

- Tape the poster paper high on the wall.

**Instructions:**

- Keystoners form a line.
- Each player has a marker.
- The first player runs across the room, jumps up and places a mark at the highest point on the paper they can reach.
- Players take turns until everyone has had a chance to jump.
- Keystoners then try again to get even higher.
- Continue until it is clear that the highest height has been attained.

### Create a Dance\*

**Materials:**

- None

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Keystoners stand in a circle.
- One player makes up a simple movement or dance move, such as a pose, a toe tap, a turn, a jump, etc.
- The whole group does that move together.
- The next player makes up another dance move.
- Players then do both moves together, creating a chain of movements in a row.
- Continue around the circle until everyone has contributed a move to the dance.

### Alien Greeting\*

**Materials:**

- None

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Tell Keystoners to imagine they are from another planet.
- They have to think of a sound and motion that might be used in greeting someone from their planet.
- It could be something similar to what we do when we greet someone—wave and say “hi!”
- Go around the circle and ask each Keystoner to share their greeting with the group.
- As they do, others respond by repeating the greeting.

### Favorites

**Materials:**

- Paper, pens/pencils
- Container (such as a bag or bowl)

**Preparation:**

- Write the following categories on separate pieces of paper:
  - ✓ Animals
  - ✓ Cereal
  - ✓ Candy
  - ✓ Book
  - ✓ Movie
  - ✓ Board game
  - ✓ Song
  - ✓ Sport
  - ✓ Holiday
  - ✓ School subject
- Fold papers and put them in container.

**Instructions:**

- Keystoners sit in a circle.
- Pass the container to the first player.
- That person pulls out a piece of paper and reads it aloud.
- Every player must share their favorite thing in that category.
- Continue with as many categories as possible.

### Seven-word Biographies

**Materials:**

- None

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Keystoners sit in a circle.
- Each must sum up their entire lives in seven words.
- For example: “Born. New brother. School. Basketball. Disney World.”
- Encourage players to have fun and be creative.
- Give Keystoners a minute to think about their words.
- Go around the circle sharing the seven-word biographies.

### Newspaper Fashion Show

**Materials:**

- Old newspapers (one bunch per group)
- Duct tape (one roll per group)

**Preparation:**

- Think about a theme for the fashion show, such as a red carpet at an awards ceremony, a wedding, a graduation

**Instructions:**

- Keystoners form small teams.
- Each team receives a bunch of old newspapers and duct tape.
- Each team has four minutes to create a costume using the newspapers and duct tape.
- The costume must be modeled by one of the team members.
- Tell them the theme for the fashion show.
- Teams have one minute to model their fashions.

### Airplane Answers\*

**Materials:**

- Paper, pens/pencils

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Give each Keystoner paper and a pen/pencil.
- Keystoners write a question on the paper they would like to ask someone else.
- They then make paper airplanes out of the paper.
- When finished, they fly the airplanes around the room.
- Each player picks up someone else's airplane and throws it.
- They continue until you say "stop."
- Everyone picks up an airplane.
- They take turns reading the questions and answering them.

### Ultimate Soccer\*

**Materials:**

- Soccer ball

**Preparation:**

- Make sure there is enough space to play the game safely.

*Note:* This activity is best done outdoors or in the gym.

**Instructions:**

- Keystoners form two teams.
- Each team selects a goalie.
- Goalies stand on opposite sides of the room.
- Players must begin on their half of the room (where their team's goalie is).
- You place the ball in the center.
- A player from one of the teams gets possession of the ball.
- Players must get the ball to the opposite team's goalie.
- The ball can only be moved by passing or dribbling.
- At no point can teams run or walk with the ball.

### Balloon Football\*

**Materials:**

- Balloons

**Preparation:**

- Set up two rows of chairs in lines facing each other, about four feet apart.

**Instructions:**

- Keystoners form two teams.
- Teammates sit on the chairs facing each other.
- Each person keeps one hand on their chair seat.
- The balloon is tossed in the air.
- Players attempt to bat the balloon over the heads of the opposing team and behind them.
- Whenever the balloon lands on the floor behind one team, the opposing team scores.
- Players can move all around the chairs but always must keep one hand on their chair.

### Beach Ball Fun\*

#### Materials:

- Inflatable beach ball
- Permanent markers

#### Preparation:

- Inflate the beach ball.
- Write random questions on the ball:
  - ✓ Where were you born?
  - ✓ What makes you laugh the most?
  - ✓ If you could do anything for a day, what would it be?
  - ✓ Do you have a nickname? What is it?
  - ✓ If you could travel back in time, what year would you travel to?
  - ✓ If you were a super-hero, what powers would you have?
  - ✓ What's your favorite holiday?
  - ✓ How did you find out that Santa wasn't real and how old were you?
  - ✓ If you could take only three things to a deserted island, what would they be?
  - ✓ Snapchat or Instagram?

#### Instructions:

- Keystoneers throw the beach ball to each other.
- When they catch the ball, they answer the question closest to their right thumb.
- After answering the question, that person passes the beach ball to a new player.
- Players continue throwing the ball and answering questions.

### Pass and Duck Relay\*

#### Materials:

- Two soccer balls

#### Preparation:

- Make sure there is enough space to play the game safely.

*Note:* This activity is best done outdoors or in the gym.

#### Instructions:

- Keystoneers form two teams and line up single file.
- Each team chooses a "thrower."
- Give each thrower a soccer ball.
- The thrower stands facing the first person in line—about 10 feet away.
- When you give the start signal, each thrower tosses the ball to the first teammate in line.
- The first person immediately throws the ball back to the thrower, then ducks and stays down.
- The thrower throws the ball to the second person in line.
- Throwers and teammates continue passing the ball until the last person throws the ball back to the thrower (over the heads of the team).
- The first team to be ducked down entirely wins.

### Create a Story

**Materials:**

- None

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Keystoneers sit in a circle.
- One person begins a story with one or two sentences.
- The story starter could be anything; for example:
  - ✓ “The car skidded to a stop, and she threw open the door.”
  - ✓ “When the photo was developed, he was shocked!”
  - ✓ “One day when I was talking to my dog, he answered me.”
  - ✓ “For her birthday, she got a personalized robot.”
- The person to the left adds more to the story.
- The story continues around the circle, with each player adding more details.
- The story is complete when everyone has added to it.

### Picture Mirrors

**Materials:**

- Paper, pens/pencils
- Flip chart/white board and markers

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Keystoneers form pairs.
- Partners sit back to back.
- One partner faces the front (where the flip chart or board is) and the other faces away.
- Give paper and pens/pencils to the partners facing away.
- On the flip chart or board, you draw a picture.
- The picture can be anything: a park, a symbol, a house, a boat, a person’s face, a bowl of fruit, a race car, a mountain, a school bus, a skyscraper, etc.
- The partners facing the front have to describe the picture to the partners who are facing away.
- The partners facing away have to draw the picture, without looking, just by following the description.
- Each pair shares their pictures.

### Take the Treasure\*

**Materials:**

- Any small object to represent the “treasure” (such as a set of keys)
- Blindfold
- Newspaper

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Keystoneers sit in a circle, with a chair in the middle.
- On the chair, place the “treasure.”
- Ask for a volunteer to guard the treasure.
- Place a blindfold on the volunteer, and give him or her a rolled-up newspaper “baton.”
- The volunteer must guard the treasure from thieves while blindfolded, using the newspaper baton.
- Once the guard is in place beside the chair, quietly choose a thief from the circle.
- The thief must attempt to sneak up to the chair and without alerting the guard, snatch the treasure.
- Meanwhile, the guard listens for the thief and tries to swat him or her with the newspaper baton.
- If the thief is swatted, he or she must return to the circle.
- If the thief succeeds in stealing the treasure and returning to the circle, he or she becomes the new guard.

### Is It a Plane or Superman?

**Materials:**

- Paper
- Colored pencils and markers
- Timer

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Give each Keystoneers a piece of paper and pencils/markers.
- Each person has one minute to start a drawing.
- When you ring the timer (after one minute), they pass the drawing to another person in the group.
- Keystoneers continue passing the drawings for three rounds.
- You hang the drawings on the wall, and Keystoneers walk around and look at them.
- The person who started each drawing can say what their plans were when they began.

### Puzzled People

**Materials:**

- Index cards, postcards, or something similar

**Preparation:**

- Cut the cards into two pieces, each cut differently so that each piece pairs with only one other

**Instructions:**

- Distribute half a card to each Keystoner.
- Give them a minute to find the person with the other half.
- Once they've made the connection, partners spend two minutes to find out three things about the other person.
- These have to be something the partners are willing to share.
- Partners then have two minutes to share what they learned about their partners.

### Follow the Leader

**Materials:**

- None

**Preparation:**

- None

**Instructions:**

- Keystoners sit in a circle.
- One Keystoner volunteers to be the "detective."
- The detective leaves the room.
- One the detective has left the room, choose a leader.
- Explain that when the leader makes a move, everyone else also must do the movement.
- The move should be simple, like clapping their hands, snapping their fingers, raising one arm, tapping their knee, turning their head, etc.
- Explain that the leader will alter the move every few seconds, and everyone must copy.
- The leader should make the move quietly, without calling attention to themselves.
- Everyone else copies the change.
- The detective returns and tries to guess who the leader is.