

Icebreaker Activities for Childbirth Education

Goals of icebreakers

1. Help students get acquainted. As they interact, and learn what they have in common, they can provide peer support to each other.
2. Gets students up, active, engaged, and having fun. Engaged students learn more than those who just sit and passively absorb information.
3. Can reinforce their confidence and competence: by starting with what they *already know*, it's easier for them to feel that they can take in all this new information and tie it into existing skills and knowledge.

Formats for icebreakers, and examples of their use:

- *Paired interviews*: Match each person (or couple) up with one other person (couple) to interview each other. Afterwards, students are asked to share with the class something they learned about their partners.
 - Often used for initial introductions: due date, planned birthplace, boy/girl, something else they have in common.
 - Other ideas: fears about birth, what they're looking forward to (or not!) about baby, what they've heard about breastfeeding, positive & negative
- *The little white lie*: Go around the circle, each person says three unusual things about themselves, two of which are true, one of which is false. Then class members guess which one is false.
- *Small group discussion*: Class is divided into small groups, then given topics. Afterwards, one person summarizes each group's discussion.
 - Pain: Assign 1 topic per group: How does our society view pain? What helps you to cope when you're sick or in pain? Talk about physical challenges you've faced, and how you got through them.
 - Hopes and Fears: Divide group into men and women. Ask each to discuss hopes and fears, then present to the other gender.
 - Common discomforts of pregnancy.
- *Mixers*: Students are given a list of things to find out about others.
 - Scavenger hunt: find someone who's wearing the same color as you: have them sign their name here. Find someone who grew up near you.... Find someone who works in a similar field...
 - Or... they're given a sheet with all students' names on it. They must find out something they have in common with each person.
- *Brainstorming*: Put sheets of paper up, divide class into small groups.
 - First paper says: "Relaxation: Things which help me feel relaxed."
 - Second: "Distraction: Something I do to take my mind off my worries."
 - Third: "Getting active: anything that inspires me to get up and move."Later, when covering early labor, tell them they already know how to cope with early labor. Reinforce ideas of relaxation, distraction, and labor-enhancing activity.