



Obesity UK

Peer Support Group

Running a good peer support group

Starting conversations with the group



It can be hard to start conversations that make everyone feel included in the group, particularly when the group does not know each other.

Icebreaker exercises can sometimes be a helpful way to kick-start conversations and help a group learn about each other. There are some important things to consider when using icebreakers:

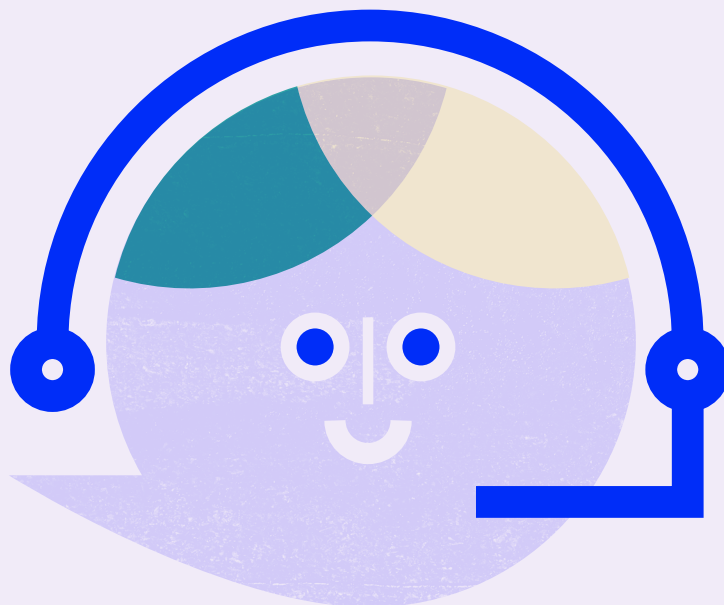
- They should be voluntary, as some people may not be comfortable doing them.
- It can be helpful to offer people the chance to sit out of the activity or write responses rather than speak.
- It is important to be tactful with icebreakers and not to ask personal questions. This may involve being clear with the group at the start that you do not expect people to disclose any personal or sensitive things about themselves.
- It is important to use icebreakers that are suitable for groups with different cultures, religions and languages.
- They may take up too much time if the group is large.

Examples of icebreaker exercises

Below are some examples of icebreaker activities suggested by peer support groups at Obesity UK which you could use:

- Ask everyone what their favourite decade was and why.
- Ask everyone for a favourite song and why (where culturally appropriate).
- Talk to the person next to you for two minutes, swap then take a minute each to feed back. Good for demonstrating listening skills (for face-to-face groups only).

Other examples can be found on page 9 of the following resource from Mind, Developing peer support in the community: a toolkit: <https://www.mind.org.uk/media-a/4247/peer-support-toolkit-final.pdf>.



How to get in touch

At Obesity UK we are happy to chat with you and answer any questions you may have.

We would be happy to hear your feedback and ideas for this resource.

We can also connect you with other people facilitating peer support groups for people living with obesity.

Please get in touch

Contact us: <https://obesityuk.org.uk/contact/>

Contact us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Obesityuk>