

MEETING ONE:



GETTING STARTED

1 WELCOME! 10 mins

Aim: To help to put people at ease and enable everyone to speak.



IN PERSON:

- Name labels to hand out, either pre-written or for people to write themselves
- Pens or pencils

ONLINE:



- Ask people to add their name to their screen for everyone to see

TASK:

Ask each person to say their name and a 'fun fact' about themselves (for example, an unusual middle name or hidden talent).

Keep it light-hearted – more personal details will be shared in later activities.

2 ICEBREAKER 15 mins

Aim: To help group members get to know each other and to feel comfortable in the group context.



This will depend on the activity you select.

TASK:

Pick an icebreaker that is appropriate for the nature and age of your group; some suggested icebreaker activities are listed on page 30.

3 INTRODUCTIONS

Aim: To help remind everyone of the purpose of the group, and establish an equal and respectful atmosphere.



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IN PERSON:

- Post-it notes
- pens or pencils

ONLINE:



- Access to online post-it notes, using a Miro board for example
- Or, the facilitator types up responses and shares their screen

TASK:

If meeting face to face ensure everyone is comfortable and sitting in a way that reflects an equal and supportive environment (for example, in a circle).

Explain that this is a chance for everyone to get to know each other by sharing why they have come to the meeting and what they want to get out of the group. Ask for a volunteer to go first. Although you are facilitating the meetings, the space is for all the group members and their views are most important.

As each person says what they would like to get out of the group, ask them to also write their answers on post-it notes.

Display the post-it notes on the walls or on a large sheet of paper. Take time to review the ideas as a group, and share reflections on the differences and similarities.

This activity can help to clear up any misunderstandings about the group and, even more importantly, help to steer the group's work towards meeting the aims of all the group members.

4 SETTING UP A GROUP AGREEMENT

Aim: Developing a group agreement together enables everyone to have a say in how the group will work and share responsibility for meeting its aims. Everyone should know why they are attending the group and what is expected of them.

Any organisational requirements (like confidentiality and safeguarding policies) need to be clear to everyone too.

30 - 45 mins



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IN PERSON:

- Large paper or flip chart paper
- Pens
- Materials to stick the agreement to the wall

ONLINE:



- Access to online post-it notes, using a Miro board for example.
- Or, the facilitator types up responses and shares their screen

TASKS:

Explain the exercise and ask each person to suggest at least one thing that would help the group to feel like a safe space where they could discuss anything they wanted to share

Make sure common issues such as confidentiality, respect, and approaching the discussion with an open mind are covered, as well as any organisational policies.

Write down what you have agreed and display it prominently at every meeting

Let the group know that this agreement is theirs, so they can revisit it whenever they want to. Encourage them to take responsibility for making sure everyone sticks to the agreement. You can do so too, but it is better if group members take responsibility for this themselves.

DEBRIEFING



Aim: Develop the habit of debriefing at the end of each group meeting, so that group members can reflect on the discussion, and let you know if they are struggling with anything

Sometimes just sharing the fact that it has been difficult is sufficient to help someone feel supported.

TASK:

Each person in the group take turns to answer one or more reflexive questions. You can select these yourself or ask the group to come with ideas

These questions should help the group members to process their responses to the session and to focus on looking after themselves – especially after difficult conversations

One facilitator could go first to show the participants that all responses are okay.

YOU COULD START WITH:

- Say one thing you have learnt from today's meeting.
- In three words, how are you feeling after today's meeting?
- What is one nice thing you are going to do for yourself this week? (For example, have a cup of tea and a rest after the meeting, or listen to your favourite music.)

Make sure everyone has the chance to speak. Follow up with anyone who seems upset in any way (one-to-one if that is more appropriate)



You can get in touch with the coalition by emailing the Coordinator Rachel Walters at rachel@endchildpoverty.org.uk

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