

OLDER SIBLINGS WORKSHOP

Age: Over 10 years old

Duration: 1 hour

Schedule

15 minutes: Human BINGO Icebreaker

HUMAN BINGO

Supplies Needed:

- Copies of the BINGO sheet (at end of document) for each participant
- Writing utensil for each participant (a choice of a colored marker has always been popular)
- Small token reward as participants finish.
 - We would recommend against sugared rewards
 - Consider, instead, stickers, squish balls, light-up rings, etc.

Lessons learned:

- Participants will get to know each other, particularly names
- Participants will foster personal connections that can set the stage for more sharing later in the workshop

This is a great activity to have brothers and sisters do as they arrive. If you have very young participants, who don't read or write yet, you may want to provide some other games available for them to entertain themselves with.

For this activity, give brothers and sisters a “human bingo board” that has different facts people may have about themselves. Brothers and sisters can use this board and its questions to ask people things about themselves and get to know one another! When someone finds another person who has that fact true for themselves, they write their name on your paper, in that question’s square. You can give this to brothers and sisters as they’re coming in and play with everyone until you’re ready to begin your Workshop. Whoever gets all the blanks filled gets a prize!

For example, here are some human bingo questions:

“Has blue eyes” “Likes to sing in the shower” “Likes Italian food” “Likes baseball” “Can whistle”

As a participant, if I found someone who had blue eyes, they would sign their name on that square on my bingo board. Once I have a *different* name for each question, I win a prize!

5 minutes: Welcome

- Go over bathroom locations, confidentiality, respecting one another

20 minutes: Understanding Down syndrome:

Similarities & Differences

SIMILARITIES & DIFFERENCES

Supplies Needed:

- Paper and drawing utensils

Lessons learned:

- Participants discuss strengths and weaknesses of themselves and their sibling to learn that they are alike.
- Participants will get accurate answers to their questions about Down syndrome that may arise as participants discuss differences.

For participants on the younger spectrum of the age group of 10 and older, they can draw a self-portrait and then another portrait of their sibling. They can then use these pictures to prompt discussions of similarities, differences, what makes each of unique, what you like and don't like about your sibling, etc. Also talk about the ways in which participants are similar and different to their siblings. For example, they may share the same hair or eye color, or they may have the same favorite TV show. They may have differences within their favorite sports, how fast they learn, and favorite teacher or subject in school. These questions and prompts can lead to further discussions about various situations and experiences brothers and sisters may find themselves in. Many of these situations and emotions will be covered in the Topics section of this site, so be sure to check that out, so that you're prepared for the conversations that will arise!

10 minutes: Things Parents/Others should know

THINGS PARENTS/OTHERS SHOULD KNOW

Supplies Needed:

- Paper
- Writing utensil
- If you want to film, phone or other camera/video camera

Age group: Ages 10 and up

Lessons learned:

- Participants will be given the opportunity to talk about their experiences and learn from one another and the facilitator about these topics, as well as communicate some of their needs to their parents, friends, etc.

Ask brothers and sisters to write and/or record (in some cases, we have filmed the siblings) some things they think their parents should know about being the brother or sister of someone with Down syndrome (may touch on some things under Topics). Additionally or alternatively, they might write about something that they think others should know about Down syndrome in general or specifically their sibling.

This will give brothers and sisters the opportunity to convey both the medical/biological facts of Down syndrome, as well as expressing their personal and practical knowledge that comes from being a sibling and viewing this person with Down syndrome as more than a list of facts and features as defined by their diagnosis.

After everyone has had a chance to work on their own—or in pairs—reassemble as a group to share thoughts. You can use the responses to draw out validations and responses from other participants.

10 minutes: Closing Remarks

- Share with them the *Benefits of Having a Sibling with Down syndrome*
- Have siblings come up with their own list of benefits

BENEFITS OF HAVING A SIBLING WITH DOWN SYNDROME

There is a long list of all the benefits of having a sibling with Down syndrome. Your sibling will show you things about the world and your life that you never would have learned except through them. We are a special group of people; I can promise you that. Things can be tough; there's no doubt about it. But your sibling will provide you with unconditional love and teachings about yourself and others. Siblings of people with Down syndrome listed the following things as just a few of the benefits they've gotten from being the sibling of someone with Down syndrome.



KEEP IN MIND...

1. Acknowledge the range of feelings that siblings may bring to the workshop.
2. Say what they feel is common—others experience that, too.
3. Give them practical things to do to remedy the situation.

RESOURCES TO CHECK OUT

1. Read up on different Topics to prepare for any questions that may arise!
2. Look under Activities to download worksheets and explore different games.
3. Check out Dr. Skotko & Sue Levine's book *Fasten Your Seatbelt: A Crash Course on Down Syndrome for Brothers and Sisters* for more helpful information!

HUMAN BINGO

Has blue eyes	Likes to sing in the shower	Was born in September	Likes Italian food	Likes baseball
Can name a U.S. state that begins with "C"	Can curl his/her tongue	Reads the newspaper in the morning	Has gone fishing	Prefers vanilla to chocolate
Likes winter better than summer	Likes bananas	Has a sister or brother with Down syndrome	Can whistle	Likes pepperoni pizza
Likes to watch scary movies	Likes to swim	Can wink	Is wearing brown shoes	Went to zoo last year
Is the oldest child in the family	Has a cat	Has visited another country	Plays soccer	Can count to ten in another language