

MATES Junior Activity Resource Guide

Goal: **Academic skills**

Activity Type: Group
Relationship Stage: Any

Activity Name:

"Brainstorming"

Objective:

To practice brainstorming and speaking up in a group

Preparation Time:

5-10 minutes

Activity Duration:

25-30 minutes

Required Material:

- 5 large sheets of paper or a whiteboard
- Markers
- 5 prepared problems

Instructions:

- Before the session, make a note of 5 problems you want the mentees to brainstorm.
- If you are using sheets of paper, write the problem at the top of each sheet. Otherwise, just have them to hand to write on the whiteboard.
- Gather a group of mentees around a table and tell them you're going to present them with a problem, and then together you'll brainstorm any possible solutions. Even if they are crazy or not realistic, any idea is a good idea!
- Write everything down on the paper or whiteboard.
- Brainstorm for about 5 minutes per problem. You can also have a goal for the number of ideas (e.g., 15 ideas in 5 minutes).

Further Notes:

- The idea is not to decide on one "best" solution, but to simply have everyone offering something and to build their comfort level for participating in group discussions.
- Imaginary, wacky problems (e.g., what should I do if I'm on a plane and all my cat's fur falls out?) are good for taking the pressure off being realistic and pushing their imagination.
- If mentees are struggling to start talking, have another mentor there to throw some silly suggestions into the ring, just to help everyone relax.