

Here is a list of 10 ice-breaker activities for teletherapy:

1. Word Clouds: Help your client build an online word cloud with a list of words that are important to them. There are several sites available for this, but Wordclouds.com was relatively straight forward. Essentially, you ask the client to type in a certain number of words that feel important to them (e.g., pets, work, baseball). The program allows you to choose how much weight each word should hold, which could be an interesting conversation starter.
2. Life Timelines: Pull up a virtual whiteboard, draw a line, and ask the client to add a certain number of important events in their life. You may also want to make your own timeline to share. Let the conversation flow from there!
3. Pictionary: This can be played on any virtual whiteboard! You may want to ask the client to draw something that has a story behind it or is important to them.
4. Wheel of Names: For a group session, find a list of icebreaker questions that are relevant to your client's age (can easily be found through a search engine). Then, enter all the participants' names into the wheel on wheelofnames.com. The wheel will spin and land on a name. Whoever it lands on gets to answer an icebreaker question from your list! To help make your clients more comfortable, you may want to give them an option of two or three questions to choose from. To provide a visual, you could type the questions up on a powerpoint for your clients to read.
5. Show and Tell: This works especially well for clients who are in their homes. Tell them they have 1 minute to go grab something from their house that is important to them, then ask them to come back and tell you all about it. You may also want to take a turn showing and telling! This doesn't have to be limited to kiddos, you can easily sell this activity to adults as well
6. Name, Place, Animal, Thing: This popular game works well via telehealth, especially in groups. To play, someone picks a letter. Each player has to list a famous person's name, a place, an animal, and a thing that begins with that letter. The first person to type all of the answers into the online chat box wins!
7. 20 Questions: This classic game is available online at 20Q.net. You or your client think of something (e.g., place, object, animal) and the website asks questions to try to guess what you're thinking of. This is a low pressure option that doesn't require the client to say much about themselves, but allows them to start therapy with something fun and laid-back!
8. About Me: Find an "About Me" themed worksheet from a site like TeachersPayTeachers.com and screen share it. Don't forget to fill one out about yourself before asking your client to do it; remembering that if they learn more about you, they feel more trusting and comfortable, which will likely increase buy-in to therapy techniques.
9. Storymaker: Go to ABCya.com and search "Storymaker" to find a fun little activity for children to create short stories with words, pictures, and drawings. Use this opportunity to ask your client to write a story about their life, their favorite vacation or birthday, or to just describe all their favorite things!
10. Would You Rather: Psychcatgames.com has an online version of "Would You Rather". You could screen share this site for an easy game that can be played for any amount of time. The questions are geared towards older adolescents or adult clients.

Remember it is not at all a waste of time to spend therapy minutes on getting to know each other, building trust, and getting comfortable in this setting!