

# Hand on Shoulder

From *Ryhmä toimivaksi* by Laura Jääskeläinen

**DURATION: 10–20 MINUTES**

The teacher gives the group a series of prompts and asks participants to place a hand on the shoulder of someone who matches the description.

For example:

- a. Someone you've met before
- b. Someone who is the newest to you
- c. Someone you've talked to the most in your life
- d. Someone you've spoken to the least
- e. The very first person you noticed or met in this group

If someone has only met the others today, they can choose the first person they noticed or saw.

Then, participants are asked to recall the moment they met that person and briefly share it in pairs or small clusters. Allow a few minutes for this conversation. Finally, invite some volunteers from each group to share with the whole group where and how they first met.

## **LAURA'S TIP:**

*It's important that students feel safe and comfortable during the group activities. Interaction can feel risky when you're unsure how others will react. So we don't want to pressure anyone to join or speak more than they're ready for. When the students have control over how much interaction they're ready for, it's so much easier for them to join in.*

### **Hi! I'm Laura Jääskeläinen**

I'm a teacher turned group dynamics coach from Finland. This activity is from *Ryhmä toimivaksi*, my bestselling Finnish guide to building safe, connected classrooms. An English edition is on the way.

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