

Date Used: _____

Group: _____

HUNGER HURTS

Topic: World Hunger

Purpose of this Session:

For most young people, world hunger seems remote and unreal. They sometimes hear about it, or see pictures of starving people, but they don't really identify with the victims of world hunger, who could be people like themselves who enjoy hamburgers and pizza. This TalkSheet was designed to help our young people think about their own eating habits in light of world hunger and to see how their faith affects their lifestyle decisions.

To Introduce the Topic:

An effective way to get the group's attentions for this discussion is to bring a delicious selection of food to the meeting and eat it in front of them. While you are eating, make some announcements, or talk about something, but keep eating and say, "I didn't have time to eat before the meeting, and I hope you don't mind my eating in front of you. . ." If the food you are eating is really appealing (such as a nice, hot pizza), they will probably go nuts watching you eat. You might be able to have a pizza delivered just as the meeting begins.

Debrief the experience by asking how they felt while watching you eat, smelling the food, etc. Introduce the topic "Hunger Hurts" and distribute the TalkSheets.

There are also many excellent films, posters and slide presentations available free or at a very low cost from organizations such as World Vision or Compassion International which you could order.

The Discussion:

Item #1: This forces the students to think about the kinds of foods they enjoy eating the most. Without being judgmental or trying to make them feel guilty, point out the simple truth that in many countries, young people have no choice about what they eat. Most have never tasted the wonderful variety of foods available to us.

Item #2: Junior high students are a hungry bunch. Their bodies are in a state of constant growth and need plenty of nourishment for healthy development. Let them share their responses with the group. Point out how important food is to them as well as to young people around the world.

Item #3: Go over each statement. Item "b" is one to study carefully because many adults as well as young people believe the hungry and the poor are to blame for their condition. Be sensitive to the ones in your group who are overweight when looking at "d" and "e". Their self-esteem is already suffering. Some may bring up dieting at this point. Talk about dieting because many young people of today have problems in that area. Far too much emphasis has been put upon dieting and being thin. Anorexia nervosa is a growing problem among teens. Try to generate specific responses to "f". Help them see they can be involved in helping feed the hungry. End this discussion by agreeing upon one specific thing the group can do to help fight world hunger.

Item #4: Ask the students to read the passages and match them up correctly. Discuss the scriptures one at a time and ask them to try to apply their messages to their own lives.

To Close the Session:

Help the students understand the food they have to eat — and take for granted — is a gift from God. We should always thank God for our food and pray others around the world also have enough to eat.

Let them know they can actually make a difference. Just because they cannot go to Ethiopia doesn't mean they cannot help provide food for the starving there. Tell the story of the "Feeding of the 5000" in which a small boy gave his lunch to Jesus and Jesus used his gift to feed a multitude. In the same way, we can give a small amount to Jesus, through organizations Jesus is using to feed the hungry, and our gift will be multiplied.

Instigate a group fund raising activity, such as a Saturday afternoon car wash at a shopping center, for a Christian relief agency. End the session with a prayer for the hungry people of the world.

Outside Activities:

Follow through on the hunger project your group decides to undertake. For more good ideas, consult the book *Ideas for Social Action* by Anthony Campolo (Youth Specialties/Zondervan, 1983).