

HUNGER HURTS.



1. What is your favorite food?

What is your favorite soft drink?

What is your favorite dessert?

2. Complete the sentences below by checking the ending that fits you.

I eat—

- one meal a day.
- two meals a day.
- three meals a day.
- more than three meals a day.
- three meals a day, plus snacks.
- whenever I feel hungry.

I eat—

- only what I know is good for me.
- anything that tastes good.
- mostly junk food.
- whatever my family eats.

I eat—

- less than the average person my age.
- more than the average person my age.
- the same as the average person my age.

When I'm hungry—

- I wait until the next meal.
- I have a snack.
- I go crazy!

3. Do you agree or disagree?

- a. There are no hungry people in America.
- b. It's their own fault if some people are hungry.
- c. It's God's will for some people of the world to be hungry.
- d. One shouldn't eat just for pleasure.
- e. It's a sin to overeat.
- f. There's nothing I can do to help the hungry people of the world.

4. Match each Bible verses with the correct statement.

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| 1. Deuteronomy 14:28-29 | a. The poor will always be around. |
| 2. Matthew 25:34-36 | b. The rich man and Lazarus will meet again after death. |
| 3. Luke 16:19-26 | c. Christians help others. |
| 4. John 12:8 | d. There's a reward for helping the poor. |
| 5. Acts 11:28-30 | e. God commands us to help. |

HUNGER HURTS [world hunger]

THIS WEEK

Most American teenagers are out of touch with world hunger. They sometimes hear about it, or see pictures of starving people on the news or in magazines, but they can't relate with these people. Our society can't expect kids to understand poverty-stricken life. America is a wealthy society, and it has the world's highest rate of obesity. This TalkSheet was designed to help your youth think about their own eating habits in light of world hunger and what God has to say about this.

OPENER

You can introduce this a number of ways, depending on your group. If you usually have meetings in the evenings where you serve food—like pizza, soda, chips, cookies, or brownies—do something different for this meeting. People in poverty-stricken countries don't have a choice what they get to eat—they don't get yummy treats. So for this meeting, have whoever makes the food (that might be you) cook up only rice or chicken broth. Serve only one scoop of rice (no sugar or soy sauce on it) or a bowl of broth (without crackers) to each youth. Just one scoop and one cup of water. Explain to them that if they were living in a second or third world country, they wouldn't be complaining about eating rice (or broth) and fresh water. Let them think about that while they're craving hot cheese pizza! Okay, later on you can be nice and serve treats—but after the discussion.

Can't go without the pizza? There are posters and descriptive videos available at no or very low cost from organizations such as World Vision (www.wvi.org) or Compassion International (www.ci.org). These give real-life stories and pictures of the poverty and hunger in most second and third world countries. You may want to get one of these and show it to your group as an intro to this discussion.

THE DISCUSSION, BY THE NUMBERS

1. Who doesn't have a favorite food? You kids will have lots of answers to this one! Without sounding judgmental, point out that in most countries young people have no choice about what they eat. Most people there could never dream of tasting the wonderful variety of foods that they have.
2. Junior high and middle school kids 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.

3. Go over each item. You may want to focus on item b—some people believe that the people who are starving are to blame. 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—some of your young people may have problems in that area.
4. Take a look at these verses and ask the kids how they'd apply them to their lives. They may have some questions like why God allows hunger and why he blesses others.

THE CLOSE

Just because your kids can't go to Somalia, doesn't mean they can't help the starving there. Let them know they can actually make a difference. Tell the Bible story about the feeding of the five thousand (Mark 6:38-44) when Jesus used a small lunch to feed a multitude. In the same way, they can support those world relief organizations that God is using to feed the hungry—he will multiply our gift.

It's easy to take food for granted because it's always there. But food is a gift from God. You may want to end the session with a prayer for the hungry people of the world and to thank God for the blessing of food.

MORE

- You may want to organize a group fundraising activity for a Christian relief agency. Several ideas include a Saturday afternoon car wash, a pancake breakfast, garage sale, or service auction. Publicize that you are raising money for world hunger and use the opportunity to make others more aware of these issues.
- Challenge your kids to participate in a 24-hour world hunger fast. You can do this as a group in a number of ways. Some groups gather pledges from people and use the fast as a fundraiser. Other groups simply start the fast with a prayer time, fast for 24 hours, and then debrief with a healthy meal at the end. Make sure you do this at a good time of the year when it's healthy for your kids to participate (you don't want parents calling to complain that their child can't play soccer because he hasn't eaten anything!) So be sure to have parental support and involvement, too.