

THIS WEEK

There are an overwhelming number of problems in the world—everything from poverty to social injustice. High school kids are able to give a lot, but many don't get encouraged to get into action. This TalkSheet allows you to discuss how your kids can make a difference in the world by helping others who are less fortunate.

OPEN

Are your kids up-to-date with what's going on in the world? You may want to distribute newspapers and news magazines (such as *Time* and *Newsweek*) and have groups find as many stories as possible about needy people and world problems. Allow five to ten minutes for the search. Then, have them share the stories. It may be helpful to have a world map there for them to see where the problem is going on. You may want to put stickers or marks on the places where the problems are taking place—both international or in the U.S.

What are the needs of others in the world? Role-play and discuss some situations of those in need—having no fresh water, eating only rice once every-other day, battling a disease without funds to get money, not being able to worship freely. How would your kids feel in these situations? How would their priorities be different? Would these situations change their understanding of God?

THE DISCUSSION, BY NUMBERS

1. Some of your kids may have difficulty answering this question. They need to understand that they can effect change in today's world! Discuss what answers they gave and how they would change the world.
2. Compare what each has listed and try to compose a master list of ten. What do they think the church can do about any of the problems? What problems are more important than others?
3. Each of these questions has the potential for further discussion. If there is disagreement on any, stop and discuss it. Point out that they can make a difference in spite of the overwhelming immensity of our world's problems. How can the little things make a difference?
4. This exercise illustrates the difference between what they are doing now and what they would like to be doing. Ask for suggestions about how they would actually go about making the world a better place. List the ideas where everyone can see.
5. Ask for a few to read their summaries and describe one thing they learned from this passage. What would Jesus say about social action?

THE CLOSE

God has given everyone gifts and abilities to help those in need—whether it be big or small. He can use each person in the room to make a difference in the world. Look at Mark 6:39-55 for example—he fed five thousand people from one small lunch! In the same way, God can and will take whatever your kids have to offer him and bless it. Because God sees and knows all things, even their somewhat small efforts will play a big role.

MORE

- Prayer is one way that your kids can help those in need. You may want to make a list of all the problems that were discussed in the introduction. Then pass this list out and ask your kids to pray for one world problem each day. Encourage them to keep an eye out for world news and keep it in their prayers. For the latest world news, check out a news Web site such as www.cnn.com or www.nbc.com.
- As a group, sponsor a needy child through an Christian organization. There are several organizations, including World Vision (www.wvi.org) or Compassion International (www.ci.org). By doing small fundraisers and/or pooling money, your group will be able to help a child in need and experience first-hand how to support someone in need.
- Dare your kids to get out there and do something! With your group, plan a service project or outreach to help those in need. A useful resource for planning is the *Ideas Library: Camps, Retreats, Missions & Service Ideas* (Youth Specialties).