

HUNGER HURTS

1. What is your favorite **food**?

What is your favorite **soft drink**?

What is your favorite **dessert**?

2. Why do you eat the **food** you do? Insert an arrow by the most common answer.

It's healthy.

It's on the menu, and it's cheap.

I like it, and it tastes good.

It fits into my diet.

It looked good on the commercial.

It's what my family prepares.

It's in the cafeteria.

3. What do you think— **Y** (yes, I think so) or **N** (no, I don't think so)?

- There fewer hungry people in America than anywhere else.
- Food is so cheap—everyone can afford it.
- Powerful world leaders are responsible for starving nations.
- Fasting and starvation aren't the same thing.
- Good probably wants some people to suffer hunger.
- I can relate with people who are starving.
- The Bible doesn't say anything about fixing world hunger.
- Starvation occurs after more than a day without food.
- There's nothing wrong with overeating.
- World hunger isn't my problem.
- Starving people have brought it on themselves.

4. In your own words, what does each verse say about hunger and the poor?

Deuteronomy 14:28-29

Matthew 25:34-36

Luke 16:19-26

Acts 11:28-30



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 can't relate with these people. Our society can't expect kids to understand poverty-stricken life. America is a wealthy society that overeats and 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.

OPEN

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. In fact they often don't have clean water to drink either. 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 steamy, hot cheese pizza! Okay, then 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 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. After the group has shared their responses, ask them what answers they think hungry youth from starving countries might have given. What if food wasn't a convenience for them?

3. These statements should generate some debate. Let them share their opinions on each one and give reasons why they agree or not.
4. Take a look at these verses and ask the group 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

Help the group understand that Christians can't be passive and uncaring about others who have no food to eat. Tony Campolo has said, "Our hearts must be broken by those things which break the heart of God." God loves every starving person in Somalia just as much as he loves us.

Just because they can't go to a starving country 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 their 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

- Organizations like Compassion International, World Vision, and many others rely on financial support. 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.