

SPARE CHANGE FOR CHANGE



Overview:

Learn how a little money goes a LONG way in developing countries by examine how much buildOn members spend each day on unnecessary things. Compare that amount to how much is needed to build buildOn schools. Then, set up change collection jars at local businesses to capture small amounts of spare change to make BIG changes globally.

Time: 5 minutes during week one to hand out tracking sheets
30 minutes during the second week, plus time spent approaching businesses about change jars.

Materials:

- *Track Your Money* worksheet (optional). Students could also just use a notebook.
- *Construction Costs* worksheet.
- Calculator (optional).
- *Global Priorities* worksheet
- Containers to use as collection jars. Containers with thin plastic lids work especially well since you can cut a slot into the top.
- paper/markers/tape or glue and possibly printed buildOn materials or stickers.

Week 1:

- Explain that for the first time EVER buildOn members have a homework assignment. Every day between now and next week's meeting, members should track all the money they spend on nonessential items. Next week we are going to add up everyone's totals and do an activity with that amount.
- Explain the difference between essential and nonessential items. Ask everyone if food is an essential item. Everyone will say yes. Ask if food from a restaurant is an essential item. Here there might be some debate. Give some more scenarios and have members decide if it's essential or nonessential:
 - New Clothing? – Essential only if you have no older clothing you could wear. Essential if you are just buying clothing for function and not paying extra for fashion.
 - A magazine?
 - After school snacks?The bottom line: An item is essential if you are paying the lowest price possible for something you absolutely need to get by. Everything else is non-essential.
- Hand out the *Where Does Your Money Go?* worksheet. Explain how to use the sheet.
 - Every time you make a purchase that is non-essential record it on the sheet. If you need more room, use the back.
 - You don't have to put your name on the sheet, so no one will know how much you personally spend.

- If you're not sure if an item is essential or not, include it on the sheet anyway. You can ask your PC at the meeting if you should count it as part of the total. If you don't record it, you're likely to forget about it.
- One easy way to remember to record everything is to ask for receipts and keep them all in one place. This way you can record all of your purchases at the end of every night. Of course you'll still have to remember to record those vending machine purchases and other items where a receipt isn't possible.

Week 2:

- When members arrive have them add up how much they spent the previous week and make a note of it on the bottom of their worksheet.
 - If a member is present just for week 2 have them estimate how much they spent on luxury items for the past week.
- You should collect all the sheets, mix them up, and then ask a member to add together all the totals.
 - During this time you can share upcoming service projects etc...
- Once you have the total amount spent for the group, discuss the findings.
 - Before sharing the group total ask members if they learned anything from tracking their purchases. Were they surprised by how high or low their total was by the end of the week?
 - Share the group's total for the week.
 - Is this higher or lower than people expected? Remind members that this is all money spent on nonessentials.
 - Take a look at the *BuildOn Construction Costs* worksheet.
 - In one week, what could your BuildOn program have purchased if everyone avoided all nonessential purchases and donated the money instead?
 - Now, take the total and multiply it by 4 to find out how much members could raise in month. Again, notice what this would purchase on the Construction Costs worksheet.
 - Now take the monthly total and multiply it by 12. This is what members spend in 1 year on nonessential items. What would this buy?
- Continue the discussion. Be clear that no one is expecting them to give up all their luxury purchases. Everyone should be able to spend money on things they want. Instead stress the point that there is hope in these figures. Imagine if everyone in the school gave up one week of luxury purchases. This would have a huge impact.
- Explain that this happens on a global level too. Review the *Global Priorities* worksheet. If people gave up bottled water and donated the money instead this would be an amazing change. These numbers show you that change is possible.
- Next, explain that we are going to have a sponsorship event that tries to make big change in the world from people's spare change. We are going to approach local businesses and ask if we can put a change collection jar next to their register.

- STEP 1: Brainstorm good locations for jars. Are there businesses near people's homes that might allow a change jar? Which buildOn members are willing to ask local businesses for support? Location ideas...
 - Any store or restaurant
 - Do your parents work someplace where you could put a change jar in the employee break room?
 - Can you put a change jar in the teacher's lounge at school?

- STEP 2: Decorate Change Jars.
 - Put a lot of care into your jar so people will want to donate. Make sure buildOn name and logo is clearly visible. Include the web address. On the back of the jar include the phone number of your program coordinator.

- STEP 3: Ask businesses for support.
 - If you are committed to finding a place for one jar take it with you after the meeting.
 - Bring business cards or buildOn flyers with you so business owners can fully understand what the money will support.
 - Once you find a location, record their phone number. You will be responsible for following up with your business every other week and picking up money when the jar is full.

THE EXTRA MILE:

- This is a great sponsorship project for the end of the school year, because it can continue through the summer right into next year. If you spend just a little bit of time checking on your jar over the summer (call or stop in every two weeks or so) you will provide a GREAT start to the next school year. This would be an amazing way to show your commitment to buildOn.

- Make jars on your own and find even more businesses to fill them. Remember to keep track of your jars so that when you graduate someone else can take over your collection.