

**TEN
HUNGER AWARENESS
ACTIVITIES**

**Health in the Village
Sharing Food in a Hungry World
A Chair for Everyone
Cultural Potluck
Organizing a Food Drive
Hunger Issues on the Internet
Newspaper Search
Grocery Simulation
What Kids Can Do!
How Big is the Hunger Problem?**

October 2001

**Ideas collected from materials of Church World Service, Kids Can make a Difference, and the
Gallatin Valley Food Bank**

Health in the Village

Purpose: Illustrate health problems in developing countries
Age Group: Middle school to adult
Numbers: 10 persons or more
Time: 5 minutes
Preparation: Begin with your audience standing

You are now a village in the developing world. You probably live in a country in Africa, Asia, or Latin America. To show you the challenges that many people in the developing world face, I'm going to ask you some questions:

- Does anyone need glasses for reading? If so, raise your hand.
Here you would probably be illiterate, because glasses are rarely available. Put your hand over your eye.
- Has anyone ever broken a bone in his or her upper body or arm? If so, raise your hand.
Now put that arm behind your back. You'd have restricted movement because skills to set the break were in short supply and the bone didn't heal right. A note on ratios of doctors to population: 1 doctor to 420 persons in the USA, 1 to every 7,000 in the developing world, and 1 to 36,000 in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Has anyone ever broken a bone in his or her lower body or leg? If so, raise whatever appendage you have left.
You might also be physically limited because the skills to set a fracture were in short supply and the bone didn't heal right. Stand on one leg.
- Has anyone ever had diarrhea?
An inconvenient discomfort for us, it is deadly for many in the developing world (especially children) where 1.3 billion people lack access to safe drinking water. You can sit down.
- Has anyone here ever needed a blood transfusion to stay alive?
No blood is available due to lack of refrigeration and equipment. It was a two-day walk to the nearest hospital. You would likely die. You can sit down.
- Does anyone here know someone with HIV or AIDS?
80% of HIV positive persons live in the developing world with little or no medical treatment available. You can sit down.
- Is anyone in your immediate family 58 years of age or older?
In the developing world the average life expectancy is 57. In some countries it is much lower. You can sit down.

- Has anyone ever had major surgery, without which they would not have survived? Such surgery is often available only in urban centers. You would likely be dead. You can sit down.
- Has anyone here ever had mumps or measles? In the developing world, as often in our own inner cities, what for us are fairly benign childhood diseases often kill those already weakened by malnutrition. You can sit down.
- Are you female? In many parts of our world, women eat only after all the men and children are fed, leaving the women weak and much more vulnerable to illness. Their weakness leads to maternal mortality 18 times greater in the developing world than here. If you are female, please sit down.

What struck you during this brief exercise?

What feelings arose?

What questions?

Sharing Food in a Hungry World

Purpose: To demonstrate global patterns of food distribution and population.
Materials: World map
Bread 20 to 30 slices, depending on group size.
Age group: Middle school to adult
Time: 20-25 minutes

On a world map, ask participants to find the five most populated continents- Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, South America.

1. Divide the group into continents by percentage of population.

		Group of 20	Group of 30
Asia/Pacific	57%	11	16
Europe, Former Soviet Union	17%	4	6
Africa	11%	2	3
Latin America	9%	2	3
North America	6%	1	2

2. Hold up the loaf of bread and explain that it represents all the food that will be eaten today in the world. Then divide the bread according to the percentages eaten on the five continents and give the pieces to one person in each group.

Bread slices for 20 30

Europe	9 slices	13 ½ slices
Asia	3 “	4 ½ “
N.America	6 “	8 “
Latin America	1 “	1 ½ “
Africa	1 “	1 ½ “

- Instruct the group to distribute the bread in their circle but not to eat it at this time. They might give the same portion to everyone, or be more realistic and give larger pieces to some who would represent the rich and a lesser portion to others representing the poor. Continents without much bread may try to get bread from others. Encourage discussion within and between continents.
- Ask all participants to hold up their portion of bread and note how the bread was divided.
- Ask the following questions:
What did you see happening here?
What happened in your group?
What feelings did you experience during the simulation?
In what ways might your actions and feelings be paralleled in the daily interaction within and between people in countries, continents?

A Chair For Everyone?

Preparation: chairs for each participant, radio or tape player, music.
Time: 10 minutes

Invite each person to sit in a chair. They represent the population of the earth. The chairs represent the earth's resources. If those resources are divided equally, there's more than enough for all. Play the music once and then stop? See? Everyone has a seat. Now divide the whole group by 5.

But the resources of the world are not distributed equally. Ask 1/5 of the group to sit on the floor. You represent the poorest fifth of the human family, about 1.3 billion people, yet you collectively earn just 2% of the world's income, about a dollar a day.

Ask 3/5 of the group to share a half of a chair each. You represent the world's middle class, about 3.5 billion people, with enough to get by. You earn 35% of the world's income.

Ask the last 1/5 of the group to spread out on all the rest of the chairs. You represent the richest fifth of the human family. 1.2 billion people, earning 65% of the world's income. You have more than enough, enjoying many personal conveniences.

Ask the students where they think their family would be seated. How can we begin to build a world that works for all people?

Organizing A Cultural Pot Luck

Even if you do not live in an ethnically diverse community, you can still plan an exciting Cultural Pot Luck. Have participants research recipes from their chosen geographical area, or ask them to bring a potluck dish that represents their cultural heritage.

In Haiti:

It is never polite to eat in the presence of others without offering some of your food. An unexpected guest who arrives when someone is eating may ask for some of the food without being considered rude. Haitians strongly believe that *manje kwit pa gen met*-cooked food-has no owner.

Discuss the common food items that are used in different cultures. What makes the dishes different? What did the participants discover about the diets of those in other countries?

Organize A Food Drive

Your group may choose to do a school-wide or office-wide food drive

- If you are trying to reinforce a nutrition lesson about the food guide pyramid, cut out a pyramid from construction paper and have the students place their donations in the appropriate place on the pyramid. Try to get donations from each category.
- Ask the group to contact a local food bank or pantry to see what foods are needed. See if a tour might be arranged or for a speaker to come and present to the group from the Food Bank.
- Participants may also work in teams and develop a “menu” for a day and collect those items they chose for their day’s meals.
- A “Scavenger Hunt” food drive assigns points for different food items that the group collects, and the group with the highest points wins a pizza party or other treat.

Videos About Hunger

- **“Hidden In America” video by Jeff Bridges**
- **“Feeding Our People” (for Montana)**

Newspaper Search

Materials:	Local newspaper including classified section for each participant
Preparation:	With participants, prepare a list of expenses that families must pay (shelter, food, clothing, car, utilities, etc)
Time:	20-30 minutes

Have the participants search the classifieds for the current price of a one bedroom and two-bedroom apartment and take notes on costs.

Have them look for ads for basic home furnishings and note prices.

Look through food ads and see if they can give a “best guess” about how much food might cost for a week. Now have them do the same for clothing.

Let the group look through the employment section of the paper and see if there are any jobs they qualify for and take note of the salary. Have the students multiply the hourly wage by 40 hours/week to get a rough estimate of wages.

Add up average expenses noted by participants.

Did they have enough income to pay for expenses? Talk about what choices need to be made between wants and needs.

Nationwide statistics are showing that households now have to pay close to 50%, and sometimes more, of their income just to pay for housing. How does this affect the hunger issue? Brainstorm alternatives such as “living wage” ordinance, subsidized housing, etc)

Grocery Simulation

Preparation: Arrange a trip to the local grocery store with your group.
Prior to the trip, have the participants work in small groups and plan a menu for a week, including breakfast, lunch and dinner. Participants will need to write out a grocery list from their menu.
Prior to your trip, call your local Food Stamp office and get an estimate of how much money (food coupons) an average family receives.

Ask each group to go through the grocery store (given a time limit) and jot down the price of the items they have on their grocery list. They will add up this price list back in the classroom.

For discussion: Were they able to complete their “shopping” in the allotted time? Was the food more expensive or less expensive than they thought? Were they tempted to add any extra to their grocery list because of the displays, sounds, smells? Given the amount allotted for food stamps, would they be able to purchase all of the items on their list?