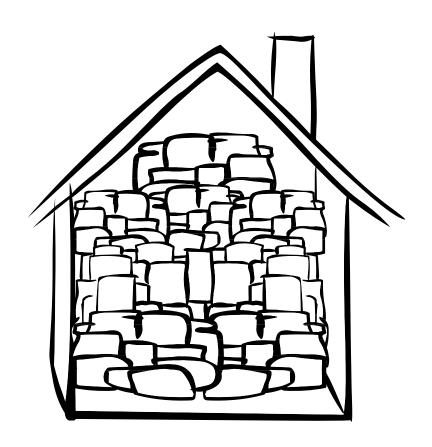
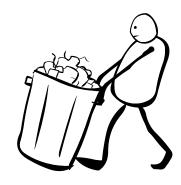
LET THERE BE...STUFF?

A SPIRIT-FILLED RESPONSE TO A CONSUMER-CRAZED WORLD
A Faith-Based Program for Christian Teens





created by





Acknowledgements...

A very heartfelt thank you goes out to all those in the Christian community and the broader faith community who reached out to the Story of Stuff, sent us emails, wrote us letters, and phoned in, to tell us about how you were using the film and encouraging us to make this curriculum. Your work has been an our inspiration and we hope that this will help you on your way.

Additionally, an enormous debt of gratitude is owed to Gwen Gordon who shepherded this project forth and put in countless hours of research, design, and development into these pages. As it is, this project would not have been possible without her.

Thank you.

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Introduction

The Big Picture

ET THERE BE...STUFF?: AN INTRODUCTION

People across all faiths share deepening concerns about the environmental crisis we face. We see our life-support systems unraveling as weather patterns become more extreme, polar ice caps melt, and preventable diseases increase. In 2009, leaders at the UN Conference on Environment and Development, the Earth Summit, declared that: "The major cause of the continued deterioration of the global environment is the unsustainable pattern of consumption and production...and developed countries should take the lead in achieving sustainable consumption." In short, God's Creation is in trouble because of our ravenous relationship with our stuff.

What will it take to make the difficult changes needed? We did see a temporary dip in the level of consumption during the recent recession, but as the economy has begun to recover our consumption habits have also bounced back. It is clear that when the money is available our demand for an ever-increasing supply of stuff persists, hinging in part on our perception that growing consumption equates with economic growth and prosperity. Just learning about the problems facing our environment is not sufficient to create real change. To change behavior, people need a structured program with support for taking action and they need opportunities to see the difference their action.

It's an all hands on deck situation! Everybody's best efforts are needed. But while all our efforts matter, young people, more than any other population, promise to make the biggest impact. They are likely to be more open to changing behavior patterns since their habits aren't as engrained. And their energy, creativity, and optimism can be unstoppable. Supporting young people in making changes early is one of the most effective and gratifying places to focus our efforts.

Since *The Story of Stuff* first premiered in 2007 it has been watched online over 10 million times. The Story of Stuff Project has received thousands of requests for educational programs, especially from the faith community, and has partnered with GreenFaith, an interfaith coalition for the environment to meet this need. Together we have developed this 6 week series for teenagers of faith designed to ignite their passion for Creation, help them understand the problems the planet is facing, raise awareness of the changes needed, and empower them to make them. We hope to support them in developing environmentally sustainable patterns of consumption that honor Creation and deepen their spiritual lives.

Let There Be...Stuff? Program Overview

The Let There Be...Stuff? faith-based teen program is designed for a group of 6-15 youth between 13-18 years old to attend at their house of worship and is led by a facilitator. The program is organized in six sections:

- 1. **Caring for Creation** Opening ourselves to the awe and wonder of Creation and our role as Earth stewards.
- 2. **The Story of Stuff** Revealing the whole Story of Stuff, from cradle to grave, its impact on people and the planet and hearing the call to take action.
- 3. **An Unfortunate Creation Story** Looking at the specific stories of some of our favorite Stuff: What's in it, how it was made, how it got to us, and the real cost of production to the planet and people.
- 4. **Don't Buy It** Learning how we are being manipulated by the media to keep endlessly consuming and how we can start thinking for ourselves and have more fun.
- 5. **Waste Not** Learning where our stuff goes when it leaves our hands, the true cost to people and the planet, and how we can reduce our waste.
- 6. **Going Forth** Celebrating student's achievement in taking the course and supporting them in taking their next steps as Earth stewards beyond the course.

Each section provides opportunities for young people to:

- **Think** gain new information about stuff and think about its impact on their lives
- **Reflect** connect what they're learning to God's teachings related to the topic
- **Engage** explore the theme more deeply
- Get Inspired learn about actions other teens have taken
- Enact take action on what they've learned

Taking Action

Students choose actions to be completed during the week between the sessions. Each action opportunity is weighted and assigned a value of 1-3 points depending on the amount of effort it involves. This will be done on the honor system, so students will tally their own points each week and report them to you at the beginning of each session. At the end of the fifth session, you will add up the totals for each student and give an award to the highest scoring individual. At the end of the fifth session students will also vote for a variety of Earth stewardship awards.

Buddies

ET THERE BE...STUFF?; AN INTRODUCTION

At the end of each session students will be assigned a buddy for the week. Buddies will commit to having a at least one check-in call with their buddy between sessions each week to provide support for their actions and make the program more fun. They will get a new buddy each week.

Facilitator Information

Our heartfelt congratulations to you for taking on this program! You will be playing a vital role in supporting your students in becoming good Earth stewards. We celebrate you for taking on this role as a service to God and Creation, and for the betterment of these young lives.

The program is designed as a journey with each session building on the last. Because sessions don't stand on their own, it will work best if you have a group committed to taking the whole journey together. The bond and mutual support a consistent group offers will deeply enhance everybody's experience and make the program much more effective. We recommend you take the time to enroll a group and their parent(s)/guardian(s) before your first session, with the understanding that they are committing to a six-session journey together. We will provide some guidance for this in the Preparing for the Journey section.

Communication with parent(s)/guardian(s) is an important part of your work as a facilitator. We suggest you send them a letter at the beginning of the program (this is included in the preparation section) and invite them to a celebration at the end of the program.

This program is in its earliest stage of development. You are the very first participants to use it and your feedback will help shape the program and make it more fun, effective and usable for future groups. It takes a village to design a program and your feedback will help raise a few barns for us. Please let us know what does and doesn't work by going to the website **www.storyofstuff.org/teach.php** and filling out the feedback form. Don't worry, we'll remind you at the end of each session as well.

We wish you joy and success as a facilitator!

Preparing for the Program

ET THERE BE...STUFF?; AN INTRODUCTION

Start by getting inspired! Your inspiration and enthusiasm are contagious. They will attract eager and committed students and give you the fuel you need for the journey. If you haven't already, before you do anything else watch *The Story of Stuff.* It is the centerpiece of the program and will get your fire started. Once you've seen it consider how amazing it would be if every teen understood the true impact of their consumption habits and chose a more sustainable path. Imagine them feeling closer to God as they do. Imagine the joy and gratification of being a guide for them in this process!

To get a group of 6-15 passionate teens to commit to the program, we suggest you start making announcements a month before the program starts. Post it in at least two bulletins before starting sign-ups. You could also suggest that the Pastor/Preacher does a youth sermon/message around it the week before sign-up starts.

Make a poster and put it up wherever young people are likely to see it. Here are some things you can say:

• "Have you ever heard of the internet sensation, *The Story of Stuff*? Do you ever wonder what you can do to make the biggest difference on the future of the planet? Do you want to feel closer to God while you're at it? If the answer is "YES!" and you're between 13 and 18 years old, then you have a great adventure ahead. Come be part of the Let There Be Stuff..? program. Commit to six sessions and change the world. Contact_____."

Enrolling Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

We also suggest holding a screening of *The Story of Stuff* film at your congregation and inviting parents of teens. You'll find a lot of useful information in the "Host a Screening" Packet (www.storyofstuff.com/downloads.php#pdfs). After the screening, ask the parents what the film made them think and feel, particularly as it relates to their children. Share with them your plans and enthusiasm for the course as a way to frame the message of the film within the context of their faith and provide constructive things that can be done about it. You can describe the session themes and even pick out some of your favorite exercises and describe it to them. Pull out all the stops to get a buzz going.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

If you don't already know the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the students who have enrolled in *The Story of Stuff* course, begin your contact with them with a letter of introduction. Send this letter to them the week before the course starts. In it you will let them know that you are inviting students to look at some hard realities about our world and make changes. Those changes are based on their love of God's Creation and their desire to serve God by caring for Creation. Let them know how important they, as parent(s)/guardian(s), are in their children's journey.

Sample Letter to Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

Your teenager is about to embark on a very special adventure. Let There Be...Stuff? helps them understand the impact of their consumption habits on the environment and turn their love of God and Creation into effective action. It is a six week program. Each week they will commit to doing actions at home between sessions.

We have designed this program to support your child in understanding the impact and implications of their choices. We invite you to use it as an opportunity to examine your own choices as well. That will demonstrate to your child that they can make a real difference not only in their own lives but in others' as well.

Each of the program's sessions asks your child to share with you what he or she is attempting to accomplish in the Action Plan for the week. This sharing allows you to anticipate the kinds of activities they will be undertaking on their journey to become good Earth stewards. It also makes it possible for you to play a consistent role in supporting and learning with your child. If your child forgets to share what they're doing, we suggest you make a point to ask them. Your child will also be assigned a buddy each week to support them in taking action between sessions.

I've attached the course schedule with the dates, times, and themes for each session. The last session will be a celebration. I would be honored and delighted to have you participate I'll remind you the week before and find out if you are planning to attend.

This is an exciting new program and I'm looking forward to getting started. Thank you for the privilege of working with your child. Please feel free to call me with any questions you have.

Sincerely,

Your Name Address Phone number

Let There Be Stuff...? Course Schedule

Session	Date	Time	Location
Session 1: Caring for Creation			
Session 2: The Story of Stuff			
Session 3: An Unfortunate Creation Story			
Session 4: Don't Buy It!			
Session 5: Waste Not!			
Session 6: Going Forth!			

Preparing for the Sessions

The first thing to know is that there are no hard and fast rules about how to go through this material. Every group is unique and you will find your own style and system. Just trust that you are the right person for the job and that you'll be guided to give the students what they need.

Begin each session a few days before by reading through the whole session plan to make sure you're comfortable and familiar with it. Make notes or highlight any sections you need to call special attention to. We have designed each session to be an hour long, but there can be a lot of variation in the length of the activity or exercise depending on the group. Try to keep it to the suggested length, but if the learning is rich and students are engaged, you can improvise and shorten another section later in the session to accommodate the time.

There are also occasionally a few options provided for a particular section of a session. In addition to reading and highlighting the session, we suggest you choose the exercises you'll do, collect your materials, prepare your exercises, reflect on the biblical text, and make sure you're comfortable with the content and the flow before you start. We encourage you to make any modifications you're inspired to make to the session schedule, if you think it will enhance the learning. We also appreciate you sending those changes and adjustments along to us as feedback. This is your group and your experience, so your inspiration and creativity are critical to its success.

NTRODUCTION

Gathering Materials

To save money and make the congregation aware of the course, ask members to contribute:

- Nature magazines like National Geographic for Session 1.
- Pop culture magazines full of advertisements relevant to children for Session 4.
- Three-ring Binders or Folders make sure these are either being reused or are Earth friendly.
- Any other needed materials that you or the church don't already have in stock.

Have them drop off magazines and binders at least a week before the course begins.

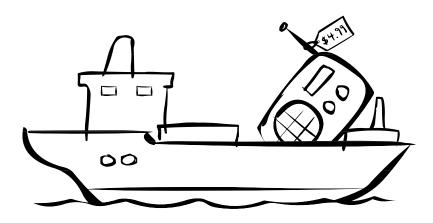
The first page of each session provides an overview with summaries, goals, key concepts, and all the materials and preparation you'll need for that session. There will be handouts you'll need to print ahead of time. Be sure to leave yourself enough time to gather and print out all the materials.

Finding a Good Room

We know that it can be tricky to find a good space to use at the church. So, do the best you can. If possible, use a space with windows so that students can see a little bit of nature during the course. Also, if you can, use a space with room where a group of your size can move freely. Most of the exercises are set up for students to do sitting in a circle but some require that they get up, move chairs out of the way, or even go outside. We have provided alternatives in case that's not an option.

Keeping Posters on the Wall

Throughout the course, students will be creating murals. If possible, find a space where you can leave the murals on the wall so you don't have to put them up and take them down every week. Having them displayed will also allow others to see them and get inspired by the students' journey. In addition, there will be a posters that should remain up for the whole series. These include: the Promise Poster, which you'll be referring to at the beginning of each session and the Right Stuff Actions Board, which collect the pictures and artifacts from the actions students take between sessions. It will be much easier if you use a room where you can leave these on the wall!



Religious and Facilitation Preparation

Each week, we have provided a preparation section for you to reflect on the religious text for the session and to consider and prepare for any facilitation challenges you might face. Exploring the true cost of consuming can be difficult material for youth to face and their resistance is natural. They may also feel the conflict between the message of the program and their family's values and lifestyle. We have attempted to help you feel as prepared as possible to meet their resistance and help them hold the inevitable tensions in a way that increases their learning.

Action Plans

At the end of each session students will commit to taking some actions and will take home an Action Plan. Between Session 4 and 5, there is also a group mission. It is important for students to share what they've done between sessions to receive encouragement, inspire each other, and share the learning. The period for sharing homework at the beginning of each session also provides the opportunity for you to reinforce the value of everything they do between sessions. They will be invited to document their actions each week to share and post in class. To display these photos tape them onto a large piece of butcher paper on the wall titled "Right Stuff Actions." We recommend you post one for each session starting with Session 2 and title each one with the prior Session – the one that inspired the actions. As we mentioned, you'll leave this mural up each week as well and will become a focal point for the Session 6 celebration with parents.

General Supplies

Here are some things you'll probably want to have at every session, but which aren't listed in the session material lists:

	name tags (for the first session at least)
	clock and/or timer
	tape
	a chime to get people's attention so you don't have to yell.
	note paper
	pens – ballpoint pens and large colored pens
	butcher or newsprint flip chart paper
\Box	computer and projector (if possible) for screening Story of Stuff segments

You will always want to have your course materials, the student roster, and the tally sheet.

Additional Materials

We strongly recommend students keep a binder or folder for the course. If possible, we recommend you provide these. It's great if you can get a donation of reused binders from members of the congregation. Otherwise, you can buy Earth friendly binders or three-hole punch folders. There are lots of options available with a quick search online. Bring binders to the first session as part of the launch of the course.

Media needs

In the first session there will be an optional slide show and in each subsequent session there will be a video clip. You can download the slide show as a power point deck onto a computer. You will need either a computer screen that is big enough for the group to watch together or a computer projector for the slide show. If you don't have the equipment to show it, don't worry, there is another option for that section. *The Story of Stuff* video is central to the program, so you'll want to be sure you can show it easily. You can download the video onto your computer or order a DVD at www.storyofstuff.org. You will also need a large television, computer or projection screen for the video.

Bible Passages

All Biblical quotations come from The New Revised Standard Version, copyright 1989, 1995 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Finally, one of the best ways you can prepare for the journey is through prayer. In addition to lesson preparation, take some time to pray or meditate on how *The Story of Stuff* speaks to you and your relationship with Creation. Ask God to give you the courage to guide the group with honesty, respect, clarity, humility, and humor.

Facilitation Tips

Setting the Tone

- Welcome teenagers as they are In case you don't remember, being a teenager is mostly a time of learning who you are by how your peers see and respond to you. So don't be surprised if most of their attention is on each other. Just know that teens learn best with and through each other with a supportive adult guide. Fighting it is futile. Work with their stage of development by holding them accountable to their own goals, standards and promises for the course and letting them have non-disruptive fun.
- **Creating safety** To be willing to take risks; students need to know that it's safe to make mistakes, and fail. The promises are a good start.
- **Make it playful** Just because the content is serious, doesn't mean the course has to be somber. People learn best when they're playing. Feel free to bring humor and delight to the sessions and students will relax and take more risks.
- **Model the principles** Walking the talk elicits respect and inspires participation. We learn a lot more from what they see then what we hear.
- **Be transparent** Revealing your own mistakes without embarrassment creates an open environment in which it's safe for everyone to make mistakes.
- Make everything that happens right Whether students come in late, something breaks, or a participant becomes resistant, your response can either create more stress or turn an awkward moment into an opportunity to connect and/or learn. Don't resist anything. Just stay focused on the purpose of the course and on loving your students.

Conducting Exercises

- Make sure they understand After giving instructions for an exercise, ask if there are any questions and make sure they understand what they're going to do.
- Break into groups first If the activity requires breaking into groups, teams, or pairing up, break into the groups first, then give the instructions for the activity.
- **Break it down** We can only remember a few instructions at a time. If there are several steps to an exercise, give students an overview of what you're going to do and then give the instructions again when they need them. Don't expect them to remember more than one instruction at a time.

• **Timing** - Use a timer and let students know when they have a minute left and then just a few moments before they need to wrap it up. If things are really cooking and you have a little extra time in the program, you can bend time a little as needed.

Debriefs and Group Conversations

- Know where you want to go with a conversation and at the same time, be flexible and go where the group needs to go at a given moment.
- Stir the Pot. Throw out a question and see what comes back. Don't be afraid if there's no response. Sometimes it takes awhile for thoughts to form. Just reframe the question and ask it again. It's OK to play the "Devil's Advocate," challenge assumptions, and sometimes act as the 'clueless facilitator' to check for understanding or explore other perspectives.
- Build on comments by asking questions that will take the conversation deeper. If the conversation isn't clear to you, you're probably not alone. Ask a question to gain clarity (e.g 'Could you say more about that?").
- Be Patient with what may seem like an unrelated story or comment and listen for its relevance to the course.
- Let Participants teach each other. They are their own best teachers. That means you can let a conversation or a comment go for awhile without any comments. If someone has made a point, you can reinforce and affirm it.

And So It Begins...

God Bless you and your group's journey. May you all enjoy yourselves, may it bring courage, hope, strength, and peace to your hearts and may it bring health to our world!

COURSE ROSTER

LET THERE BE...STUFF?: AN INTRODUCTION

Let There Be...Stuff? Course Roster







Name	Parent(s)/ Guardian(s) Name	Email	Phone

TAI Y SHEFT

Let There Be...Stuff? Tally Sheet



Names	1	2	3	4	5	6

SESSION 1: CARING FOR CREATION

LET THERE BE...STUFF?
A SPIRIT-FILLED RESPONSE TO A CONSUMER-CRAZED WORLD
A Faith-Based Program for Christian Teens



created by





SESSION 1: OVERVIEW

Caring for Creation

ENTER & CONNECT – 3 MIN

ICEBREAKER – 7 MIN

Option 1 – Web of life Option 2 – I love my neighbor who...

INTRODUCE - 2 MIN

Set context for the Session

THINK/FEEL – 5 MIN

Option 1 – Slide show on Awe and Wonder Option 2 - Behold Creation circle

REFLECT - 10 MIN

EXPRESS - 10 MIN

Mural: Caring For Creation

ENACT - 23 MIN

GROUP PROMISE - 8 MIN

SET UP BUDDIES - 5 MIN

ACTION PLAN – 8 MIN

EXIT – 2 MIN

Preparing for Session One

Facilitation Preparation

Congratulations, you are about to launch the course! Because there are a lot of logistics to get through in this session it might be easy to get distracted from the spirit and purpose of the session – to instill the sense of awe and wonder at Creation and build a strong foundation for the group to have a rich and productive journey together.

Make sure you really feel comfortable with the flow of the session so you can be as relaxed and welcoming as possible. The most important thing is to start off on the right foot and create a good feeling among the group as they start their adventure together.

This session can establish the level of safety students feel in expressing themselves honestly. Take the time to really hear and validate feelings students share. The more you establish a safe space for sharing what will likely be positive feelings in this session, the easier it will be for students to share more difficult emotions when they come up later in the course.

Overview

This session launches the program, helps the group form, and sets up the structures for students to learn together. It focuses on helping students open their hearts to feel the awe and wonder of Creation in a way that moves and inspires them to take better care of it as Earth stewards. It provides a context for the journey they're on and the challenges ahead and establishes ways they can support each other in and between class.

Goals

- Build a safe, respectful, supportive community
- Open their hearts to feel the wonder and awe of Creation
- Inspire them to become good Earth Stewards
- Provide a Christian context for their choice to take care of the world
- Develop a strong commitment to participate fully

Themes

Religious

- Awe and wonder at Creation
- Earth stewardship

Religious Text

- Genesis 1:1-5
- Psalm 8

iviaterials for Session 1	
Student Roster	
Tally Sheet	
Session 1 Text sheets	
☐ Bible Text sheets	
_	
Ice Breaker	
A ball of green wool yarn or string	g
(organic wool with natural dye if	
possible)	
\square 8" pieces of the same yarn for	
promise strings	
Promise Poster	
Promise Sheet handouts for each	
student	
A flip chart size piece of paper	
Colored pens/non-toxic markers	
Slideshow	
Downloaded Power Point slide	
show	
Computer	
Projector	
☐ Speakers	
Screen	
_	
Mural	
A stack of nature magazines (ask	
church members to donate)	
☐ Scissors	
☐ Glue stick	
Colored pens	
Butcher paper	
_ , ,	
Buddy Set Up	
Paper & pen	
1 Hat or bowl	
Action Plan	
Binders – 1 per student	
Action Plan Instructions – 1 per	
student	
Action Plan for Session – 1 per	

SESSION ONE: CARING FOR OREATION

student



Session 1 To-Do List

- Print student rosterPrint point tally sheet
- Mural post a piece of butcher paper on the wall prior to class.
 Write Caring for Creation as the title
- Creation slide show Download slide show, set up a slide show projector and screen. Select quiet, ambient background music to play with it and cue it. Have student text sheets ready to hand out
- Promise poster Have a large piece of paper posted on the wall. Title it "We Promise..." for the Promise Poster
- ☐ Make copies of Session 1 Text sheets, 1 for every 2-3 students.
- Make copies of promise sheets, 1 per student
- Make copies of Action Plan instructions, 1 per student
- ☐ Make copies of Action Plans Session 1, 1 per student
- Buddy selection write each student's name on a piece of paper and put it in a hat
- ☐ Have binders for each student ready to hand out
- ☐ Select music for Closing Circle

Biblical Texts

Genesis 1:1-2:4

NOTE: Genesis selection available at the back of the Session One on pg. 16.

Psalm 8

Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded a bulwark because of your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger.

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?

Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor.

You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Notes on Biblical Passage

Throughout the Bible, we see that Creation is a sign of God's creativity and love, and that God wants us to serve as its protectors and stewards. The two passages chosen for this session, Genesis 1 and Psalm 8, expresses these themes as well as any others in the Bible.

Genesis 1 is a very familiar passage. We've all heard it numerous times. For many people, it brings to mind beautiful images of mountains and rivers, sunsets and forests. It reminds us of the earth's beauty and can seem soothing and reassuring.

HEPARATION

Notes on Biblical Passage Cont.

But when it was first written, people were very vulnerable to the natural world; storms, famines, diseases, pests, and attacks from wild animals were common and dangerous. Imagine how you might have felt about Creation if your family had been afflicted by disease or natural disaster or if you'd seen people you love killed by environmental causes. It might not have been so obvious to you that Creation was good. In fact, you might have felt the opposite.

And yet, Genesis 1 expresses over and over that Creation is "good." By the end God looks at the totality of Creation and calls it "very, very good." During the period the passage was written, 586-538 BCE, the people of Israel were in exile in Babylon, under severe oppression. Under these circumstances, it might have been challenging for them to see Creation as "very, very good." This repeated affirmation of Creation's goodness seems even more remarkable.

Psalm 8 continues the themes first expressed in Genesis 1 and takes them a step further. It seems to be written by someone struck in utter amazement at the awe and wonder of the night sky strewn with its millions of points of light (sadly, an uncommon sight in our overlit modern lives). We can practically hear the author gasp as she beholds the magnitude of this vastness and feel herself as a tiny speck before it. Great scholars of religion have long recognized that awe and wonder are among the most basic of religious emotions, and there's nothing quite like gazing into the Milky Way to evoke those feelings. The majestic silence of the stars, their quiet magnitude and beauty, invoke a singular sense of tranquility.

And yet, in the face of this majesty, the author also remembers the human being's power in relationship to the earth. It's not enough for us simply to enjoy the awesome beauty of creation. We also need to recognize our impact on the Earth, see that it matters, and to act rightly. Whenever we eat, landscapes, plants and animals are affected. When we drink, we owe a debt to the earth's great waters. When we put on our clothes, when we clean our homes, when we fill up our cars – all of these actions have an impact. We can't live on earth without having an impact, but we can become responsible Earth stewards and choose the impact we want to have.

Awe and wonder, appreciation and gratitude for Creation, are the best starting points for learning to care for Creation. They are the basis for our love of Creation and over the long haul, we only take care of the things we love. But awe and wonder are a beginning, not an end. The Bible calls us to recognize our remarkable, sometimes frightening power – only "a little lower than God," as the Psalm puts it. Only when we reckon with our power and make it a force for good will we have done what God wants us to do for Creation.

PARAIION

SESSION 1 - Caring For Creation



Enter and Connect - (5 min.)

Warmly welcome students and give them nametags and pens to write their names.

Opening prayer (1 min.)



God, we believe that you created everything that exists, and gave us the gift and privilege of living in this beautiful world. Help us to remember earth's majesty and splendor and give us the ability to awaken that memory in everyone we know. We ask that in Jesus' name, AMEN.

Welcome!

Let them know how happy you are that they care about Creation enough to take the time to learn how to take good care of it together. It's going to be a great adventure, one that could change their lives in ways that honor and protects God's Creation and give them a deeper, more enduring joy.

Introductions

Go around the circle and have each student share their name, where they live and go to school, and one think they want others to know about them. As they do, take role on your roster. When you introduce yourself, share what inspired you to lead the course and why you want to work with teens in particular. Bring humor!

Possible Ice-Breaker Questions



- What is one of your favorite animals? And in what ways do you resemble it?
- What's one thing about yourself that you really like?
- What's one of your little personality quirks – strange and unique habits that other people usually laugh about?
- What is your favorite natural place? And what do you like to do there?
- What is the longest amount of time you've ever been outdoors without coming indoors? Where were you and what were you doing?
- Why did you choose to be part of this course?
- What do you hope to get out of it? How do you expect it to help you?
- In your opinion, what do you think it will take to make the course work?

Change it up...

If it gets too confusing having students raise their hands to indicate they have something in common with the student who answered the question, just skip that part. Instead, just have students ask a question and throw the ball of yarn to the person they want to have answer it.

Ice-Breaker (7 min)

Option 1: Web of Life (recommended)

Instructions:

- 1. Sitting in a circle, start by holding the ball of yarn with the end of the yarn firmly in one hand. Ask a question from the ice-breaker list. Then toss the yarn to the person you want to have answer it.
- 2. The person who receives the ball answers the question then asks every student who has something in common with the answer to raise their hand.
- 3. Then, they ask a new question and, holding onto a little pinch from their segment of yarn the student throws the ball of yarn to one of the students who has raised his/her hand.
- 4. That student answers it and asks everybody who has something in common with the answer to raise their hands. They then ask a new question and throw it to one of the people s/he has something in common with holding onto a segment of the yarn so that it starts to form a web.
- 5.Keep going until everybody has answered at least one question.
- 6. Then connect to the idea of the web of life and how everything is connected to everything else by saying:



You can see from this tangle of yarn, that we are all connected in some ways, our lives are woven into each other's at school, church, our neighborhoods. All of life is woven together in a similar way. For instance...

What do you think it took to make this yarn? (let students answer questions) The wool, (pause) the sheep, (pause) the person who tended the sheep, (pause) the grass, the rain, the sun, the food the shepherd ate, the loom, the factory workers, etc. etc. all the way to God. When you look at this yarn can you see the sunshine and rain? Can you see God?

Ice-Breaker (7 min)

Option 2. "I love my neighbor who____"

Instructions:

- 1. Sit in a circle and take one chair out so there is one less chair than there are people.
- 2. Give the instruction that one person stands in the center of the circl and says "I love my neighbor who___(fill in the blank with a quality or characteristic, i.e. "has red hair, has homeroom with Mr. Smith, etc.)
- 3. If you are part of the group being identified you have to move from your chair to another chair before all the chairs are taken. Because there is one less chair than number of students somebody will always be left standing.
- 4. The person left standing goes to the middle and calls out the next quality with the sentence, "I love my neighbor who...."
- 5. Do about 5-8 rounds.

Introduce (2 min)

Hand out the Session 1 Readings sheet. In a circle have students read the following, one paragraph per person



SESSION ONE: CARING FOR OREATION

- 1.1 It can take a lot of courage to face the ways we humans are treating the world. The first time we hear about the clear cutting of forests or the melting of the polar caps, we might immediately commit to recycling everything and carpooling more often. But then, if we don't get support or feel like we're making a difference we can lose our enthusiasm, close our heart, and just give up.
- 1.2 The fact that we are here means that we haven't given up! We do have the courage, belief, and strength it takes. This course is an invitation to our best selves to do what we all know in our heart of hearts is the right thing to do, what God wants us to do to celebrate and take care of God's Creation to become good stewards of the earth.
- 1.3 We're about to go on a journey together. Our first step is to open our hearts wide and let ourselves care about the world again to feel the wonder and awe of Creation. We usually ignore the things we don't care about, but we naturally take care of the things we love. Our first job is to remember our love for this world and the role God wants us to play in relation to it.

Option 1 - Creation Slide Show

This is a chance to open to the wonder and awe of Creation. Help students by creating a reverent mood. You might even light a candle. Encourage silence and invite students to imagine they are witnessing the creation of the world from nothing into everything.

Instructions:

- 1. Hand out the text of Genesis, if you haven't already.
- 2. Ask for volunteers to read only the sections in bold, one reader per section. Tell them they will take turns, each one reading a short section. The first sentence of their section will appear on the slide when it's time for them to read it. Every 2-3 slides there will be a cue for a student to read.
- 3. Determine the order of the readers before you start the slide show so you can watch it with as few disruptions as possible.
- 4. We suggest you find a nice selection of calm, quiet music to play in the background.
- 5. Only the reader and the facilitator will speak during the slide show.
- 6. Ask if there are any questions and if everybody is clear, begin the show.
- 7. After the slide show ask:
 - •What did you feel while you were watching the slideshow?



•How does it feel to think about what we're doing to this world?



Help make it feel safe for students to have and share their feelings by validating all the feelings expressed. When someone shares a strong feeling, you might ask if others share those feelings. You can share your own as well.



Think/Feel (5 min)

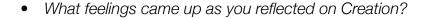
Option 2 - Behold Creation Circle

This is another way to open the group to awe and wonder by looking at the world around them as they imagine the genesis of Creation.

Instructions:

- 1. Lead the group outside to a natural area and take the Bible passage with you. If it's too difficult or time consuming to get them outside have them turn to look out a window.
- 2. Whether indoors or outside have them sit in a circle and face away from each other.
- 3. Read aloud Genesis and pause after each day of creation. Ask volunteers to call out things that remind them of what God created on the first day. Repeat the process for each day of creation, encouraging students to be reflective and creative in their answers.

After you've read aloud Genesis, have students turn around to discuss these questions:





- How does it feel to think about how we're harming Creation?
- How do you think your view of creation would be different if you had witnessed God's creation of the world?
- How would you feel about Creation if you were God and had created it?

Reflect (10 min)

1. Have students get in pairs and give them a minute to reflect on each of the following questions (4 min):



- What is your favorite place outdoors? What do you love about it?
- What happened there that was special for you?
- Have you ever felt God's presence outdoors?
- Where and when? What happened? What did you feel?
- 2. Have the pairs come back to the large circle and share some of their reflections with the whole group (2 min.)
- 3. Then ask one of the students to read Psalm 8. Share some of the reasons that you enjoy this passage, and what it means to you. After the text has been read, ask participants to discuss the following questions:



- What do you think God feels about the earth?
- What do you think God feels when people pollute?
- How do you imagine Jesus Christ wants us to treat Creation? Why?

Express (10 min)

Mural Making – Caring For Creation

Prep: Have butcher paper posted on wall and magazine, scissors, pens, and glue available

Students will be creating a series of murals together corresponding to the themes of the sessions. The murals will help them share what they're learning with the congregation and inspire others. Their first mural expresses their care for Creation.

Instructions:

SESSION ONE: CARING FOR CREATION

- 1. Offer the stack of nature magazines, scissors, and glue.
- 2. Post a large piece of Butcher paper on wall.
- 3. Have someone print the title: Caring for Creation!
- 4. Invite students to look through the magazines, find a picture of the specific part of the natural world that inspires them to care for Creation, cut out the picture and paste it to the Butcher paper.
- 5. Then, write a sentence under the image that explains what inspires them about it.
- 6. Have them share with the whole group what they wrote and why they picked that part of creation.

Enact (25 min)

Write and sign group promise together (8 min)

Prep: Have promise sheets, promise poster, and 8" pieces of yarn ready.

They will be making a group promise together to create safety and support their journey.



Promises are what hold the world together. In the end, laws can force us to do certain things – but the best things in life happen because we make promises to each other and keep them! When people make and keep promises to each other, extraordinary things can happen.

- 1. Invite them to make a promise to each other about this course.
- 2. Invite a student to go to the large poster titled "We Promise" and serve as scribe.
- 3. Have students take turns reading the promises from the Group Promise sheet (at the end of this session plan).
- 4. As you agree on each promise, the scribe should write the key word on the poster.
- 5. Once you have made the list, ask the group again if they are all willing to make these promises? It's unlikely that they will object, but make sure you make room to hear if anybody has any concerns about being able to keep their promise.
- 6. Ask if they want to add some other promises to this list, or replace some of our promises with their own. If your group decides to add some promises, write them in on the bottom of the poster. Your group might also want to create some group rules, like not interrupting when someone else is speaking or sitting up instead of lying down. You can list those at the bottom of the Promises Poster as well.
- 7. When you've got the list of promises finished, each person should sign their name on the poster.
- 8. Take out the 8" pieces of the yarn and have students tie a piece around each other's wrist as they say:



I _____ (their name) promise to use this course to serve God and his/her Creation by becoming a better earth steward!

- 9. Tell them they can keep this string on their wrist as a reminder of their commitment to care for Creation and their love of God!
- 10. Congratulate them on making the commitment!

Enact (25 min)

Set up buddies (5 min)

Prep: Put student's names on small pieces of paper and put the names in a hat or bowl.

You are going to set up buddies for the program. Let them know that the purpose of a buddy is to provide support for the actions they choose to do between sessions and to make it more fun. We can't do it alone; we need each other.

Have students volunteer to draw their buddy's name out of a hat. Once buddies form, if somebody's name gets chosen who already has a buddy, just take the name out of the hat and have the person choose another name. If buddies do not seem to be a good fit, change them throughout the program as needed.

Action Plans

Prep: Have Action Plan Instructions and Action Plans ready to hand out.

Action Plans will set them up to take action during the week between sessions.

Explanation:

- Because becoming good Earth stewards means taking new actions in their lives, they will be choosing and committing to taking actions between each session.
- Each of the actions they take is worth 1-3 points.
- The number of points reflects the amount of effort it takes and is next to the action.
- They are on the honor system here and will be trusted to tally their own points and give you the number at the beginning of each session. At the end of the course, you will add up their points and see who got the most.
- They're also all going to vote on who they think should win different awards, like Best at Behavior Change, Best Communicator, Best Insights, Most Improved Earth Steward, Most Sustainably Stylish, etc. They can also make up their own categories so everyone can win an award.
- They will be collecting these sheets in their binder.
- Encourage them to decorate their binder cover. They will be sharing their binder cover at the beginning of the next session.

Enact (25 min)

Action Plans

Instructions:

- 1. Hand out binders.
- 2. Hand out the Action Plan instruction sheet and Action Plan Session 1 sheet.
- 3. Go over the Action Plan instructions together (2 min.)
- 4. Have them decide on their actions for the week (5 min.)
- 5. Instruct students keep these sheets in their binders for easy reference. They will be referring to them at every session when they take their actions.

Student's receive the instructions below:

Action Plan Instruction Sheet

Read and think about the actions:

- Which actions would you like to do?
- Which seem like you could do them?
- Which seem like fun?
- Which seem as if they will really make a difference?

Decide which actions to take.

• Decide which actions you will do with your buddy and which you will do by yourself.

Remember to:

- Show your parent(s)/guardian(s) your action plan when you get home and ask them to support you. Think of what support you want from them. Ask them how they want to support you.
- Check in with your buddy at least one time this week.
- You can change your action plans.
- You can catch up on any unfinished actions at anytime.
- Take pictures or document what you do so you can share it!

SESSION ONE: CARING FOR OREATION

Exit (2 min)

Remember:

- Decorate their binders.
- Do their Actions
- See the awe and wonder in Creation!

Closing song:

Select at your discretion.

Blessing:

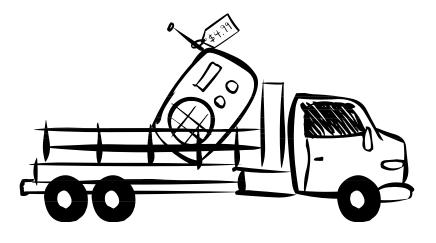
Invite participants to stand in a circle and offer a short prayer of thanks for their favorite place and for what it means to them. For instance, one person might pray:

"Thank you God, for the beautiful sunset I saw at XYZ place – remembering it always makes me feel happy and grateful."

WE WANNA KNOW...

How did it go? How much time did the exercises actually take? What worked? What didn't? What do you think would work better? Let us know at:

www.storyofstuff.org/teach.php



Bible Text

For the slide show, just read sections in **bold**.

Genesis 1

First this: God created the Heavens and Earth—all you see, all you don't see. Earth was a soup of nothingness, a bottomless emptiness, an inky blackness. God's Spirit brooded like a bird above the watery abyss.

God spoke: "Light!"
And light appeared.
God saw that light was good

and separated light from dark. God named the light Day, he named the dark Night. It was evening, it was morning— Day One.

God spoke: "Sky! In the middle of the waters; separate water from water!"
God made sky.

He separated the water under sky from the water above sky.
And there it was:
he named sky the Heavens;
It was evening, it was morning—
Day Two.

God spoke: "Separate!

Water-beneath-Heaven, gather into one place;

Land, appear!"

And there it was.

God named the land Earth.

He named the pooled water Ocean.
God saw that it was good.

God spoke: "Earth, green up! Grow all varieties of seed-bearing plants,
Every sort of fruit-bearing tree."
And there it was.

Earth produced green seed-bearing plants, all varieties,

And fruit-bearing trees of all sorts.

God saw that it was good.

It was evening, it was morning— Day Three.



Bible Text Cont.

God spoke: "Lights! Come out!
Shine in Heaven's sky!
Separate Day from Night.
Mark seasons and days and years,
Lights in Heaven's sky to give light to Earth."
And there it was.

God made two big lights, the larger to take charge of Day,
The smaller to be in charge of Night; and he made the stars.
God placed them in the heavenly sky to light up Earth
And oversee Day and Night,
to separate light and dark.
God saw that it was good.
It was evening, it was morning—
Day Four.

God spoke: "Swarm, Ocean, with fish and all sea life!
Birds, fly through the sky over Earth!"
God created the huge whales,
all the swarm of life in the waters,
And every kind and species of flying birds.
God saw that it was good.
God blessed them: "Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Ocean!

God blessed them: "Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Ocean! Birds, reproduce on Earth!" It was evening, it was morning— Day Five.

God spoke: "Earth, generate life! Every sort and kind: cattle and reptiles and wild animals—all kinds."
And there it was:
wild animals of every kind,
Cattle of all kinds, every sort of reptile and bug.
God saw that it was good.

God spoke: "Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature

So they can be responsible for the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the cattle,

And, yes, Earth itself, and every animal that moves on the face of Earth."

Bible Text Cont.

God created human beings;

he created them godlike, Reflecting God's nature. He created them male and female. God blessed them:

"Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Earth! Take charge! Be responsible for fish in the sea and birds in the air, for every living thing that moves on the face of Earth."

Then God said, "I've given you
every sort of seed-bearing plant on Earth
And every kind of fruit-bearing tree,
given them to you for food.
To all animals and all birds,
everything that moves and breathes,
I give whatever grows out of the ground for food."
And there it was.

God looked over everything he had made; it was so good, so very good!

It was evening, it was morning— Day Six.

Heaven and Earth were finished, down to the last detail.

By the seventh day
God had finished his work.
On the seventh day
he rested from all his work.
God blessed the seventh day.
He made it a Holy Day
Because on that day he rested from his work,
all the creating God had done.

Bible Text Cont.

Psalm 8

Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded a bulwark because of your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger.

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?

Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor.

You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Action Plan Instructions

Read and think about the actions:

- Which actions would you like to do?
- Which seem like you could do them?
- Which seem like fun?
- Which seem as if they will really make a difference?

Decide which actions to take:

• Decide which actions you will do with your buddy and which you will do by yourself

Remember to:

- Show your parents your action plan when you get home and ask them to support you. Think of what support you want from them. Ask them how they want to support you.
- Check in with your buddy at least one time this week.
- You can change your action plans.
- You can catch up on any unfinished actions at anytime.
- Take pictures or document what you do so you can share it!

Group Promise

I promise to...

Do everything I can to care better for God's Creation with the help of my community. I commit to the following:

Consistency

I will make my best effort to attend each session of this course.

Honestv

I will take risks to share truthfully my personal feelings and thoughts during this course even if these feelings are uncomfortable.

Respect

I will help create a safe environment by listening carefully and not making fun of others.

Confidentiality

I will not reveal personal information shared by others during our sessions. What I hear here I will keep here.

Accountability

I invite the students in this course to hold me accountable for growing spiritually and living a life that honors God and Creation

Prayer

I will pray each week for the people in our course, for God to help us learn, and for Creation's healing.

This promise, signed by all the participants in our course, reflects our commitment to each other, to God, and to Creation.

PROMISE

Session 1: Readings

- 1.1 It can take a lot of courage to face the ways we humans are treating the world. The first time we hear about the clear cutting of forests or the melting of the polar caps, we might immediately commit to recycling everything and carpooling more often. But then, if we don't get support or feel like we're making a difference we can lose our enthusiasm, close our heart, and just give up.
- 1.2 The fact that we are here means that we haven't given up! We do have the courage, belief, and strength it takes. This course is an invitation to our best selves to do what we all know in our heart of hearts is the right thing to do, what God wants us to do to celebrate and take care of God's Creation to become good stewards of the earth.
- 1.3 We're about to go on a journey together. Our first step is to open our hearts wide and let ourselves care about the world again to feel the wonder and awe of Creation. We usually ignore the things we don't care about, but we naturally take care of the things we love. Our first job is to remember our love for this world and the role God wants us to play in relation to it.



Session 1: Action Plan Create/Express Inspired Art - Spend the week with a camera, a sketchpad, or a notebook, taking photos, drawing pictures, or writing a poem every time you're inspired by something in nature. (2 pts) Communicate Stewardship Poster - Make and display a poster for your church, school, or home that reminds us of our call to be stewards of the earth. (3 pts) Worship Dear God - Write a letter to God expressing your gratitude, desire and commitment to care for creation (2 pts) Thank God - Create a ritual that helps you remember to appreciate and celebrate creation (i.e. Start and end each day looking out the window and thanking God for at least 5 things you feel grateful for about the natural world). (2 pts) Learn Mhat's THAT? - Pick some aspect of nature that you want to learn more about and do some research about it. Write it up in one page. (2 pts) Adopt a _____ - Identify a place or a kind of plant or animal that you especially want to honor and find out what, if anything is threatening its survival. Then identify a group or organization that is helping it and spend an hour volunteering with the group. (3 pts.) **Try Something New** Garden Time - Spend time in a garden. Plant your own or volunteer in someone else's. Find out about any community garden in your area and go visit it. (3 pts) Three Gifts - Remember the picture you put on the mural. Think of three creative, unusual ways in which you can actively care for that part of Creation. For example, if you're inspired by sunrises you could ride a bike to school to cut down on smog, take a photograph of a sunrise, and write a worshipful poem about sunrises. (3 pts) Be a Leader With peers Take a Hike - Skip the movies this weekend and coordinate a local hike with friends to get out into God's creation and really soak it in. Its free, its gorgeous and nothing inspires stewardship for the earth like a little time in nature. (3 pts) At home Plant It - Talk to your parents about growing some herbs, veggies, or flowers at home and then (weather permitting) plant something! This can easily be done in a pot. Go to <u>www.icangarden.com</u> (3 pts) Journal Question of the week: What about the Earth do you tend to take for granted? What can you do to remember to appreciate it? (2 pts) Total # of Points___

SESSION 2: THE STORY OF STUFF

LET THERE BE...STUFF?
A SPIRIT-FILLED RESPONSE TO A CONSUMER-CRAZED WORLD
A Faith-Based Program for Christian Teens



created by





SESSION TWO; THE STORY OF STUFF

SESSION 2: OVERVIEW

ENTER AND CONNECT (8 MIN.)

- Opening prayer
- Promise Poster
- Check-in

INTRODUCE (8 MIN.)

THINK (25 MIN.)

Homework

ENGAGE (10 MIN.)

• The Story of Stuff

REFLECT (5 MIN.)

Scripture

INSPIRE (1 MIN.)

• Teen Activist Story

ENACT (5 MIN.)

EXIT (5 MIN.)

- Option 1 Love thy neighbor while resources shrink
- Option 2 We're in it together
- Blessing

Preparing for Session Two

Facilitation Preparation

Watch the film and reflect on the thoughts and feelings it stirs in you. What is your own relationship to your Stuff? How does the message of the film challenge it? Be ready to share honestly about your own experience with your students. We offer some suggestions for responding to some challenging questions students might ask after seeing the film. Read these and familiarize yourself with the responses. If you're not comfortable responding or you don't know the answer, don't pretend you do. You can ask the whole group what they think the answer is. Or, invite them to explore why the answer to the question is important; what difference would it really make to them? to Creation?

Recognize that often, underneath a challenging question or general resistance is fear. Asking them what they're feeling and validating the feeling without invalidating the challenge can help. Help them see how much courage it really takes to face challenging truths. Affirm them for doing as well as they are. If there isn't any resistance, great! Don't stir it up if none exists.

Overview

This session is about the problems our current consumption patterns create. It uses the film, *The Story of Stuff* to show that the way we consume things is trashing the planet, hurting people, and that we're not even having fun! It provides an overview of the themes for the whole course. Future sessions will take segments of the film, deepen the learning and make them more relevant to students' lives. This session provides the opportunity for students to reflect on the impact of consumption as a whole and be open to all its implications.

Goals

- Provide an overview of the impact of consumption on vulnerable populations and the planet
- Orient students to the journey ahead and make them eager to do, learn, and act
- Support students in facing the hard truth about the state of our world
- Support students to face difficult truths about the impact of their own lifestyles and world.

Themes

Religious:

Sometimes God calls us to move beyond our resistance and face difficult challenges. Often, God sends messengers to awaken our sense of the urgency of these challenges. These messengers are like prophets and we need to take their messages seriously.

Secular:

Our system is in crisis. The way we make, use, and throw away stuff is trashing the planet, poisoning our bodies and not giving us any real joy.

Religious Text

- Hosea 4:1-3
- Matthew 3:1-3; 7-10

SUPPLY CHAIN OF A LAPTOP



Materials for Session 2 The Story of Stuff DVD or download DVD player or computer & projector if needed ☐ Promise Poster Closing – Love Thy Neighbor – chairs, music □ Handouts Session 2 Reading Sheets- 1 per 2-3 students Session 2 Action Plan forms- 1 per student **Session 2 To-Do List** ☐ Make copies of Session 2 Readings sheet, 1 for every 2 students, and have them ready to hand out. The Story of Stuff video screening. Either download the video for free off the website: http://storyofstuff.force.com/download or order a DVD online for \$10 at: www.storyofstuff.org/films.php. Right Stuff Action Board – Post a piece of paper on the wall and write "Right Stuff Actions: Session 2" as the title. Have tape and pens available. Promise Poster – Post the poster on the side wall where everyone can see it. ☐ Keep or re-post Caring for Creation mural on wall. ☐ Make copies of Action Plans, 1 per student and have them ready to hand out.

Biblical Texts

Hosea 4:1-3

Hear the word of the Lord, O people of Israel; for the Lord has an indictment against the inhabitants of the land. There is no faithfulness or loyalty, and no knowledge of God in the land.

Swearing, lying, and murder, and stealing and adultery break out; bloodshed follows bloodshed.

Therefore the land mourns, and all who live in it languish; together with the wild animals and the birds of the air, even the fish of the sea are perishing.

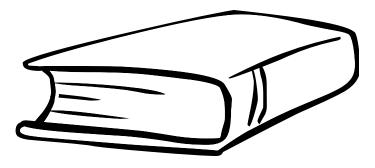
Matthew 3:1-3; 7-10

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.' This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

"Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.



SESSION TWO; THE STORY OF STUFF

Notes on Biblical Passage

In Biblical times, people who offered the kind of moral challenge *The Story of Stuff* provides were called prophets. They often weren't popular, because they conveyed God's judgment against society's status quo and against deeply engrained habits. Our two Bible readings this week are selections about two prophets – Hosea and John the Baptist.

Hosea, who prophesied between 750-722 BCE, was harshly critical of the behavior of the Israelites. During Hosea's lifetime, many of Israel's cities had grown wealthy. A small class of rich landowners and merchants began to exploit or enslave their poorer fellow citizens. At the same time, many of these richer Israelites had become comfortable worshipping foreign gods. Hosea felt that their behavior was immoral, and the book of Hosea depicts a husband married to an adulterous wife, a metaphor for the betrayal of God by Israel, which has "played the harlot" by their immoral behavior and their misdirected worship. Hosea prophesied that God would judge Israel because of their wrongdoing and lack of faith, and connected human sinfulness with the destruction not only of human society but also with the devastation of the earth.

Unfortunately for Israel, Hosea's prophecy came true. In 721 BCE, the Assyrian ruler Sargon invaded the northern kingdom of Israel, where Hosea lived and prophesied, and deported nearly 30,000 Israelites to Persia.

John the Baptist is well-known to Christians as the prophet who foretold the coming of Jesus. John's message was that the realm of God was at hand, and that people needed to turn away from their wickedness – to repent – in order to receive the love and fulfillment that God promised. Each of the four gospels show John the Baptist criticizing representatives of the ruling classes of the day and telling then in no uncertain terms that they needed to demonstrate their faith in God through their behavior. They should not rest on their laurels and assume that they had won God's approval. The political and religious rulers of the day found John to be a threatening figure and he was eventually executed because he had dared to criticize the personal behavior of Herod, the Roman ruler of the region.

As these two examples show, the Bible is clear that the role of a prophet is a vital and dangerous one. Prophets represent the message of God to people and societies who are often unwilling to reckon with God's high moral standards. How have we responded to the prophetic messages that we've heard in our own lives? Have we resisted? Have we been faithful, and wrestled with the challenging messages we've received? Have we done both? And in leading this course, what can we say to the youth that will help them learn to respond to challenging but vitally important messages in courageous, constructive ways?

SESSION 2 - The Story of Stuff



Enter and Connect - (8 min)

Opening prayer (1 min)



Dear God, because you love us so much, you challenge us at times to face painful truths and solve difficult problems, all in your service and for the well-being of your people and planet. Bless us as we learn about the ways in which our consumption hurts the community of Creation and open our minds to learn how to protect the Earth. We pray this in Jesus' name, AMEN

- Look at the Promise Poster together and ask students to raise the hand with the promise string on it if they intend to keep the promises during this session.
- Check-in: Have students share binder cover and ask what about Creation gave them the experience of awe and wonder last week. As they do, take role on the roster.
- Homework Check: Ask who did their homework. In pairs (not their buddies), have them tell each other what they did and how it went. (2 min. ea.) Back in the large group, have them each say how many points they earned that week (tally the points on the tally sheet) and choose a highlight to share. Have them post any pictures they brought on the Right Stuff Action board.
- Hand out Session 2 Readings Sheets.

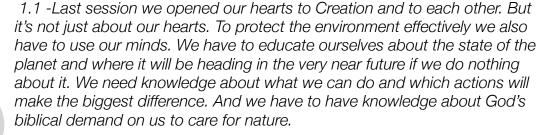
Introduce (3 min)

Recap the previous week, if needed. Ask the students:



What did we do last week? What did we learn?

Have students take turns reading, one reader per paragraph:





1.2 - Sometimes we learn things that are painful to know. But if we have the courage to keep our hearts open, and learn even more, we can also discover what a big difference our actions can make. Today we're going to learn some of these hard facts and we're going to start to think about what we can do about them.

Think (23 min)

Story of Stuff Video

Prep: Set up Story of Stuff video.

Instructions:

- 1. Invite students to take out their cell phone if they have one.
- 2. Ask them:



- Where did this phone come from?
- Where did the materials come from? What part of nature? Where in the world?
- Where was the phone manufactured?
- What steps did it go through to get to their hands right now?
- 3. Tell students that you're going to watch a video called *The Story of Stuff.* Ask for a show of hands if anybody has already seen it.

Most of us don't really have a clue where our stuff came from. We take for granted the fact that it just magically shows up on the shelf at a store when we want it, we use it for as long as we like and then just toss it in the garbage when we're done.



The video tells us the whole story of your Stuff. It was made by Annie Leonard, a woman who spent almost 20 years digging to get the answers to these questions. She's like a private investigator who followed that our Stuff from its cradle to its grave and discovered a secret life most of us could never imagine. The one it had before it got to the store and the one it has after we throw it away. She did this so we can see the truth about all the hidden costs of our Stuff.

- 4. Hand out paper and pens for students to take notes.
- 5. Tell students the film is about 20 min. long. They will be watching it in silence. Notice whatever thoughts and feelings they have while watching. They'll have a chance to talk about them afterwards.
- 6. Watch The Story of Stuff.

Engage (10 min)

Facilitation Tip:



Some students won't have any problem with the message of the film. Others might. It's natural for students to have resistance to and feel threatened by the message in the film. For any normal teenager, their material possessions are a source of identity and status. Many won't let anybody tell them that it's a problem without putting up a fight. It's important to welcome the resistance and show that it reflects legitimate feelings. Show that you understand their perspective and address their questions, while also guiding them to consider a new perspective. When someone asks a question, ask if other students have an answer before you provide one. Draw out responses from students whenever possible.

Here are some FAQ's and possible answers:

Q : She's telling me it's wrong to consume anything. But we can't live without Stuff. What are we supposed to do?

A: Annie isn't saying it's wrong to consume. She's saying the WAY we consume is hurting us and the planet. She's telling us we need to change the way we make, use, and throw away. Stuff and to stop consuming so much. She isn't against Stuff. She just wants us to cherish it, and the world, better. God understands that we need a certain amount of stuff in order to live. But God doesn't want our lifestyles to hurt other people – and that's what the film is getting at.

Q: Is Stuff bad?

A: Stuff isn't bad. Valuing Stuff over people and the environment is the problem. Both Annie and God understand that we need Stuff in order to live. But when we take the good Stuff that God made and turn it into poison I think we all can agree that that's bad.

Q: Who does she think she is? Why should I listen to her? She's not a Christian?

A: This is the same kind of comment that people made about all the prophets in the Bible – when they didn't like the prophet's message, they attacked the prophet personally. The important question is, "What do I believe in my heart of hearts about the message that the film offers?"

Q: What am I supposed to do if I need a cell phone, then?

A: Use your cell phone! And make it last and take care of it and don't chuck it just because a newer, hipper, faster version came out. The average life of a cell phone is 18 months. While we need to take better care of our Stuff, we also need to advocate for better designs that last longer and push electronics companies to take the toxics out of cell phones like they are doing in Europe.

Q: I'll bet she has a cell phone. What's up with that?

A: Of course she does. She struggles with the same challenges as everyone else. No one can pretend to be perfect, but just because it's hard to live according to our values doesn't mean that the message is wrong or that we shouldn't try.

Q: If we stop using Stuff, doesn't the economy collapse?

A: Figuring out how to shift away from an economy that depends on large-scale, harmful consumption to one that is more life-affirming is a long road. This is exactly why we have to start thinking about it now. If we are going to build a fair and healthy economy we have to design it that way and that takes time and effort!

SESSION TWO; THE STORY OF STUFF

Engage (10 min)

Discuss the Film

Instructions:

- 1. When the film is over everyone might need a quick stretch break. It can help release some tension to get up, stretch and shake out your arms and legs.
- 2. Have them sit next to their buddy from the last week and share their initial response to the video. (3 min.)
- 3. Back in the large group ask the discussion questions below as needed to get a conversation going:



- What did you like about the film?
- What didn't you like about it?
- What questions did it raise for you?
- What do you feel when you think about changing your relationship to Stuff? What would make it easy? What would make it hard?
- What's the cost of not changing? To you? To the world? To your relationship with God?

Reflect (5 min)

Prep: Hand out Bible Text

Instructions:

- 1. Read the passages Hosea 4:1-3 or Matthew 3:1-3, 7-10
- 2. Tell students: This passage is about John the Baptist, a powerful prophet who foretold the birth of Jesus and/or Hosea a prophet who criticized the people of Israel for their unfaithfulness. His message was a hard and challenging one.
- 3. Have students reflect on the following questions:



SESSION TWO; THE STORY OF STUFF

- How do you think the people of his time felt about his message?
- How do you think this relates to Annie and her message?
- What makes it possible to stay open when we hear challenging information about ourselves and our world?

Inspire (1 min)

Let students know:



Since Annie doesn't tell us how to fix our broken system, it's easy to get discouraged after seeing the film. But there are a lot of things we can do to make a difference. We can change our individual lifestyles and help change the way our schools and church deal with consumption. We can take action in our communities and we can work to change the larger systems at a national or even global level. In the next few weeks you will have lots of opportunities to explore different kinds of actions you can take that will help make a difference.

In addition, each week we'll read about a young person who responded to the bad news by doing something extraordinary on behalf of Creation. Let these stories inspire you.

Invite students to take turns reading the story – one paragraph each

Ivan Stiefel, Taking a Stand on Spring Break Mullica Hill, NJ Age 22

1.3 - Wanting to spend his vacation in service of something more important than a party, Ivan organized a spring break solidarity trip with communities in Appalachia known as West Virginia Mountain Justice Spring Break, MJSB. The program focused on working with West Virginia communities affected by the unjust practices of the coal industry. Ivan and the MJSB team spent the week fighting for a safer school for the students of Marshfork Elementary which was dangerously close to a coal silo and the toxic mess that contains. While in West Virginia, the coal mine boards released plans to open a second coal silo right next to the Marshfork Elementary.



SESSION TWO; THE STORY OF STUFF

1.4 - Feeling the urgency of the moment, Ivan and fellow activists finished the week with a sit-in at the Governors' office. While 13 people were arrested no one was charged. Inspired by the need to tell more people about what was happening in Appalachia, the following year Ivan spearheaded two trips to coal country for MJSB: one to Wise County, Virginia and one to Meigs County, Ohio to participate in protests and community service projects centered around the abuses of the coal industry. In his own words, Ivan describes the work of MJSB as helping to further "the movement for environmental justice, climate justice and a just transition away from coal." It all started with an idea for how to spend Spring Break.

Enact (5 min)

Prep: Hand out Action Plan sheet and Action Plan Instructions.

Instructions:

Ask students to pull out their Action Plan Instruction Sheets and review the instructions from the previous session:

Action Plan Instruction Sheet

Read and think about the actions:

- Which actions would you like to do?
- Which seem like you could do them?
- Which seem like fun?
- Which seem as if they will really make a difference?

Decide which actions to take.

• Decide which actions you will do with your buddy and which you will do by yourself.

Remember to:

- Show your parent(s)/guardian(s) your action plan when you get home and ask them to support you. Think of what support you want from them. Ask them how they want to support you.
- Check in with your buddy at least one time this week.
- You can change your action plans.
- You can catch up on any unfinished actions at anytime.
- Take pictures or document what you do so you can share it!

SESSION TWO: THE STORY OF STUFF

Exit (5 min)

Remember:

• Bring an object – t-shirt, electronic gadget, jewelry, book, or cosmetic to the next session.

Closing Activity

Option 1 - Love thy neighbor while resources shrink

Prep: Have music that's easy to control. Set up chairs in a circle with room to move around them.

This is a game of musical chairs but in this version nobody is ever "out." Instead of leaving the game, a chair is removed and when the music stops you have to share a chair with someone. You end up with everybody in one chair on top of each other. Once the activity is over, tell students to tag one person. The first person you touch or who touches you (whichever happens first) is your new buddy for the week.

Option 2: We're in it together

Have everybody mix up and find a random place in the room facing in any direction. Then reaching out each hand find another hand to hold. Then, closing their eyes, see if they can find their way to forming a circle. Once they have, have them go around the circle and each person say one thing they are taking with them from this session with that they didn't have when they came.

Blessing



Bless us in the week ahead, and help us to absorb the lessons we have learned today and to support each other in changing our lives. In Jesus' name, AMEN.

WE WANNA KNOW...

Congratulations on completing Session 2! How did it go? How much time did the exercises actually take? What worked? What didn't? What do you think would work better?

Let us know at: www.storyofstuff.org/teach.php

Biblical Texts

Hosea 4:1-3

Hear the word of the Lord, O people of Israel;

for the Lord has an indictment against the inhabitants of the land.

There is no faithfulness or loyalty,

and no knowledge of God in the land.

Swearing, lying, and murder,

and stealing and adultery break out;

bloodshed follows bloodshed.

Therefore the land mourns,

and all who live in it languish;

together with the wild animals

and the birds of the air,

even the fish of the sea are perishing.

Matthew 3:1-3; 7-10

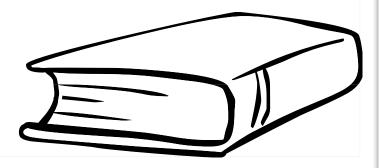
In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.'* This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

"Prepare the way of the Lord,

make his paths straight." '

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.



Session 2: Readings

- 1.1 -Last session we opened our hearts to Creation and to each other. But it's not just about our hearts. To protect the environment effectively we also have to use our minds. We have to educate ourselves about the state of the planet and where it will be heading in the very near future if we do nothing about it. We need knowledge about what we can do and which actions will make the biggest difference. And we have to have knowledge about God's biblical demand on us to care for nature.
- 1.2 Sometimes we learn things that are painful to know. But if we have the courage to keep our hearts open, and learn even more, we can also discover what a big difference our actions can make. Today we're going to learn some of these hard facts and we're going to start to think about what we can do about them."

Ivan Stiefel, Taking a Stand on Spring Break Mullica Hill, NJ Age 22

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Session 2: Action Plan

Create

☐ Imagine the past - Choose a favorite shopping place and either envision or research what natural landscape was there before the store was built. Draw or find a picture of it. (2 pts)

Communicate

- Share the news Talk to at least three people this week about what you learned in *The Story of Stuff* and maybe even encourage them to watch the film. (2 pts)
- Face this! Post an interesting fact, article or link that talks about one of the issues in the film on your Facebook page. (1 pt)

Learn

- More stories Check out www.storyofstuff.org and watch one of the other films the Story of Stuff team has made or watch *The Story of Stuff* again from a new perspective. (1 pt)
- Network Take a look at Wiserearth.org to look up organizations in your area doing this work. Make a list of the top three organizations that look the most interesting to you and explain what they do. Check out: www.wiserearth.org. (2 pts)

Have Insights

- ☐ Breakthroughs Think of an example of a time when you or somebody you know learned a hard lesson and came through it...changed a habit, became a better person. Write about it in your journal. (1 pt)
- Personal inventory -When you get home, look at all the stuff you have. On a sheet of paper, make a list of three categories: What you need, what you like, and what you don't use. Make a list of the stuff you own for each category. If it were all in one place, how much do you think it would weigh? If you could only take whatever would fit into a backpack with you, what would you take? (3 pts.)

Be a Leader

With peers

Take a hike - Skip the movies this coming weekend and coordinate a local hike with friends to get out into God's creation and really soak it in! Its free, its gorgeous and nothing inspires stewardship for the earth like a little time in nature. (2 pts)

At home

Have a Garage Sale - Talk to your parents and set a date to host a garage sale or donate the profits to a local organization of choice or to your Church. You'll not only reduce the amount of stuff in circulation, but you'll also raise money for a good cause. (3 pts)

Session 2: Action Plan Cont.

Be a leader

At school

- ☐ Show up Attend a meeting for a club or organization at your high school that's getting involved in your community or working to protect the environment. Working together not only lightens the load, it makes the work more fun. Looking for inspiration? Check out: www.dosomething.org (2 pts)
- Start a club No environmental club at your high school? Start one! (3 pts)

In the neighborhood

☐ Block party - Set a date and recruit neighbors for a block-wide yard sale. Not only will you reduce the amount of stuff in circulation, but you can raise money for a good cause and its more fun to do things with friends and neighbors. (3 pts)

In the congregation

- ☐ Brainstorm Brainstorm a list of different ways to reduce the stuff in your congregation. (1 pts)
- Stuff swap Talk with the church organizers and set a date for a congregation wide Stuff Swap (3 pts)

Tips and Tools...

Need ideas for where to get involved and how to start, check out the list of "10 Little and Big Things You Can Do" on the Story of Stuff website: http://www.storyofstuff.org/anotherway.php

Remember to take pictures of anything you did to share and put on the mural.

Total # of Points____

SESSION 3: AN UNFORTUNATE CREATION STORY

LET THERE BE...STUFF?
A SPIRIT-FILLED RESPONSE TO A CONSUMER-CRAZED WORLD
A Faith-Based Program for Christian Teens



created by





SESSION 3 OVERVIEW

ENTER & CONNECT – 8 MIN

- Opening prayer
- Promise Poster
- Check-in
- Homework

INTRODUCE - 2 MIN

THINK - 5 MIN

• The Story of Stuff Clip

ENGAGE – 30 MIN

• The True Cost

REFLECT - 5 MIN

Scripture

INSPIRE - 3 MIN

• Teen Activist Story

ENACT - 5 MIN

Action Plans

EXIT - 2 MIN

• Song and Closing

Preparing for Session Three

Facilitation Preparation

This session has a lot of reading in it. Feel free to summarize sections instead of reading them off the page. Break up the readings by asking questions periodically, like "Who can relate to that?" or, "What do you think of that?"

The heart of this session is the exercise, The True Cost. It helps students begin to see that almost all the material objects they take for granted that are produced by humans have a toxic trail. Since there isn't much time for students to learn, prepare a presentation, and teach back what they learned to the whole group, it will be important to remind them to get to the bottom line and keep it simple. Tell them to choose only a few key points and summarize their points into single sentences that get to the heart of the matter.

Overview

This session brings the true cost of extraction and production home. In it students learn about the cost of some of their most cherished and familiar possessions: Clothing, jewelry, electronics, and cosmetics. It is the first step in their journey to understand and appreciate the secret life of their stuff and the personal steps it takes to change their own habits. It is a call to action!

Goals

- Reveal the externalized costs associated with everyday household objects: clothing, jewelry, electronics, and cosmetics
- Guide students to think about where things come from before they buy them
- Light a fire of passion to make changes in their consumption habits and become environmental stewards
- Provide inspiration and guidance for making changes

Themes

Religious:

- Humanity's role in Creation
- Stewardship, responsible use of our power

Secular:

- The true cost of our stuff
- Externalized costs onto communities and the environment how we're destroying the environment, displacing communities, exploiting workers and making them sick all to make our stuff

PAHATIO

FACILITATION

Materials for Session 3 Story of Stuff clip
The True Cost Exercise Have extra "stuff" in case students forgot to bring their own cell phone clothing jewelry lotion or other cosmetic/body care product Black and white copy of map of the world (1 for each team) Instruction sheets (1 for each team) Production Summary Sheets (A different one for each team) Poster paper, colored paper Scissors Colored pens, markers, etc.
Hand-outs ☐ Session 3 Readings Sheets- 1 per student ☐ Religious Text Sheet- 1 per student ☐ Session 3 Action Plans- 1 per student
Session 3 To-Do List
 ☐ Have Session Readings and Religious Text ready to hand out ☐ Either put up a new piece of butcher paper for the Right Stuff Action board Session 3 or delineate a section of the poster you posted for Session 2 for Session 3. ☐ Re-post Promise Poster on wall if needed ☐ Set up The Story of Stuff clip cued for Extraction & Production (from 2:30-8:05) ☐ Have extra "stuff" ready ☐ cell phone ☐ clothing ☐ jewelry ☐ lotion or other cosmetic/body care product
Set up a materials station for The True Cost materialsHave Action Plans ready to hand out.

AN UNFORTUNATE CREATION STORY: SESSION THREE

AN UNFORTUNATE OREATION STORY: SESSION THREE

Biblical Passages

Genesis 1:28

God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'

Genesis 2:15

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.

Notes on Biblical Passages

When you ask people to name a passage from the Bible about the environment, one that often comes to mind is Genesis 1:28 in which God gives humanity "dominion" over creation. It's a familiar verse, which seems to give a clear description of how people should treat the earth. At first glance, the description seems problematic. "Dominion" has an arrogant, authoritarian sound to it – far from the respectful or cherishing Biblical tone that we'd hope for in relation to the protection of Creation.

The Bible actually offers several important passages that teach us how people should treat the Earth. Here, we'll look at two of these verses – Genesis 1:28 and Genesis 2:15.

One of the ways that scholars investigate the true meaning of Bible passages is to look at the meaning in the language in which they were written; Hebrew, in this case. Scholars have studied the two key Hebrew verbs in Genesis 2:15 – "till" and "keep," and have discovered important layers of meaning that give this verse vital importance.

The Hebrew word for "till" is translated as the English word "serve." This word's best-known appearance in the Bible is in Joshua 24:15. Joshua has gathered all the tribes of Israel to renew their covenant with God. He recounts the history of events through which God has repeatedly expressed divine love for God's people. At the climax of his speech, Joshua states, "As for me and my house, we shall serve the Lord."

The second verb – "keep" – is also used in ways that shed some additional light on its meaning. For example, in Numbers 6:22-27, God is teaching Moses – who has a speech impediment – to teach his brother Aaron a blessing to pronounce over the Israelites to assure them of God's compassion and care for them. The blessing that God tells Moses to pass on to Aaron begins, "May the Lord bless you and keep you." The connotation of the verb "keep" is clear. It's a loving, protective act – one that expresses generous care for another. So, Genesis 2:15 offers a remarkably positive role for people in relation to Creation. "Till and tend" become "serve and keep" a rich and positive relational meaning. It's a lovely description of what God holds our role to be

Notes on Biblical Passages Cont.

And with this in mind, we can return to the Genesis 1:28 "dominion" passage and ask ourselves a question. The Hebrew word for "dominion" is the same word that the Bible uses to describe the power that rulers have over their subjects – it's a word that really expresses a sense of power and authority. In fact, human beings have a lot of power over the earth. We consume resources, eat plants and animals, and control the Earth in ways that no other species can. Like it or not, we have "dominion."

The question is, how do we think that God wants us to use our power? Do we think God wants us to use it destructively, or with care and responsibility? Do we think God wants us to exercise our dominion by exploiting creation for selfish gain, or by treating creation with a loving kindness that resembles the care that God offers to us? This is the real question.

And when we're faced with this question, the answer couldn't be clearer.

SESSION 3 - An Unfortunate Creation





Enter and Connect - (8 min)

Opening prayer (1 min)



God, the Creator of all that exists, you have blessed us by placing us to live in your world, a world which you love and which you recognize as good. Help us understand the ways in which our methods of making so many of the goods we use causes harm to your good Earth and to your people. And bless us with the strength to consume in ways that respect creation, now and for future generations. We pray this in Jesus name, AMEN.

- Look at the Promise Poster together and ask students to raise the hand with the promise string on it if they intend to keep the promises during this session.
- Check-in What was it like for you this week to live with greater awareness of *The Story of Stuff*?
- Homework Check Ask who did their homework. In pairs (not their buddies), have them tell each other what they did and how it went. (2 min. ea.) Back in the large group, have them each say how many points they earned that week (tally the points on the tally sheet) and choose a highlight to share. Have them post any pictures they brought on the Right Stuff Action board.
- Hand out Session 3 Readings and Bible Text sheets

Introduce (3 min)

Recap the previous week, if needed. Ask the students:



What did we do last week? What did we learn?

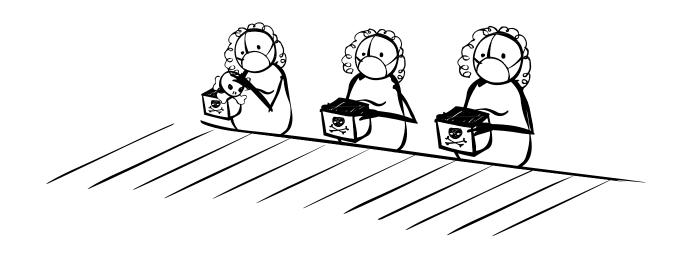
Have students take turns reading, one reader per paragraph:

1.1 - We saw all of the things that have to happen in order for our economy to keep growing and growing, how it depends on our consuming as much as possible as fast as possible, how the way our stuff is being produced is trashing the planet, poisoning us, and how we're not having any fun while we're at it. It's not a pretty picture.



AN UNFORTUNATE CREATION STORY; SESSION THREE

1.2 - Today we're going to learn how to start appreciating the secret life of a few more ordinary things in our lives - our clothing, books, jewelry, electronic gadgets, and cosmetics - so we can start to see the whole story behind the things that surround us. When we can really see how God's Creation is affected by our consumption habits, it becomes clear that caring for Creation requires us to change those habits. It's not easy. Our habits are deep. But together and with the help of God, we can make changes in our lives that will offer respect to the earth and bring us greater fulfillment.



Think (5 min)

Prep: Set up Story of stuff clip on extraction and production (from 2:30-8:05)

- 1. Tell students they're going to watch a section of the video with the themes you'll be focusing on in this session.
- 2. Watch the clip.

Engage (30 min)

Activity - The True Cost

Prep:

- Have Black and white copy of map of the world (1 for each team) ready to hand out
- Have True Cost sheets (1 for each team) ready to hand out
- Poster paper, colored paper
- Have a supply station with colored pens, markers, etc.

Summary

Using the information provided in the handout sheets at the back of this Session, students will explore the first two stages of an object's life, what Annie describes in the film as Extraction and Production. Students will learn where some of the most common stuff in their lives comes from and how its made.

Students will work in teams with each team focusing on the true cost of a different object. They will study the information sheet for their object provided in the back of the session plan. Once they've had a chance to digest some of the information, they will work together to create a visual representation of the earliest stages of their stuff- where if comes from, how it got there, what it's made of, who made it, etc. They will do a short teach-back presentation to the larger group to share their information using a map of the world to help convey the international elements of our relationship with stuff. They will incorporate their visual work into the collective mural.

Instructions

- 1. Have the students break up into four groups by counting off by 4's (All "ones" are together, all "twos," etc).
- 2. Have each group find a place in the room to work together.
- 3. Hand out one True Cost sheet (ie, True Cost: Cell Phones) and one map to each group. These can be printed ahead of time and are the end of this section.

Instructions Cont.

- 4. Instruct students to follow the instructions on their True Cost instruction sheet. They will be teaching the other students about the places where their object has traveled as it was being produced, its impact along the way, and its true cost to people and the planet. They can use the map and any other materials they want. Encourage them to be creative, but also to get their point across. Let them know that they will have 5 minutes for their presentations and that there is more material than they will be able to fit in, so they'll have to choose what's most important. (10 min.)
- 5. Have each group take a turn to teach the rest of the group what they learned and have them present on the "True Cost" of their item. Give a few minutes for the group to ask questions. Give each group 5 min. for their presentation. (20 min)

Reflect (5 min)

Prep: Hand out Bible Text

"The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and keep it."

Instructions:

- Read the passages
- Tell students



When we read the Bible, it's important to remember that it was written in a different language than English. This short passage from Genesis was originally written in Hebrew. The word "till" in Hebrew is usually translated as "serve." It's the same word the Bible uses in a famous passage when Joshua says to the Israelites, "As for me and my house, we shall serve the Lord." (Joshua 24:15) And the word "keep" is used in the Bible to communicate a real sense of God's loving kindness. It's part of a famous blessing that Aaron, Moses' brother, uses when he says, "May the Lord bless you and keep you." (Numbers 6:23) So, when you read this passage from Genesis, you realize that it presents a job description for people in relation to the environment – to "serve it and care for it," not just to use it any way we want.

Ask students these reflection questions:



- Why do you think God asked people to take care of the garden?
- How do the people feel taking care of the Garden and knowing that others around them are taking care of the Garden?
- What do you think God feels when we do a good job of taking care of the garden?
- What about when we don't do such a good job?

Inspire (3 min)

Prep: Have students ready to read from Session 3 Readings sheets



Emma Sleeth is a Christian teen who decided to write a book called It's Easy Being Green, when she was 15 years old in order to help people make the shift to a lifestyle that expressed their care for Creation. She believes that we're called by God to protect the resources that were given to us. She's speaking out to her generation – that's you! – in the hopes that you will be the ones who can end global warming and restore our world to the paradise that God desires for us. Here's a paragraph from her book.

Have a students take turns reading paragraphs from the sheets.



1.3 - "Remember when you were a young kid-playing outside and you somehow "didn't hear" your mom calling you for dinner? "Sorry, Mom, I didn't hear you screaming at the top of your lungs those, er, 25 times" seemed like a sorry excuse when she glared at you with one eyebrow raised and her hands on her hips. Don't worry, God hasn't borrowed your mother's apron, but he/she IS going to hold us all accountable for what we do or don't do to steward creation. With massive climate changes, a plethora of available information about how we are destroying the planet, and hundreds of Bible verses all pointing to our need to care for creation, saying "we didn't know" to God isn't going to cut it."

Tell students that they are going to read the story of a group of young people who haven't ignored the call!

Have students take turns reading the story, one paragraph each

Teens Turning Green, Because Looking Good Shouldn't Kill You (or the Planet) Marin, CA www.teensturninggreen.org



AN UNFORTUNATE CREATION STORY; SESSION THREE

1.4 - Looking good shouldn't kill you (or the planet) and these gals are doing something about it! Outraged by the number of chemicals and carcinogens in their cosmetics and body care products, a group of teens in California created Teens for Safe Cosmetics. Educating their peers and pushing their government, this group of teens rallied against the personal care products industry and was key in the passage of California Safe Cosmetics Act in 2005, which requires cosmetics manufacturers to report information on carcinogens and reproductive toxins in beauty products. They expanded their efforts and joined in to push the Toxic Toys Bill into law. This Bill would ban the very toxic chemical category, pthalates from children's toys and bottle nipples while continuing to work for the removal of pthalates from cosmetics.



1.5 - Approaching the issue from all sides, the girls collaborated with Whole Foods Market to develop a safe, healthy, toxic-free line of personal care products. While they continue to advocate for state and federal policies that would regulate these toxins out of our cosmetics, they have also expanded their platform to look more broadly at various exposures to toxics in your schools and homes. Taking up the charge of a toxics-free future, Teens for Safe Cosmetics became Teens Turning Green and they are now working across the country for sustainability.

Ask students how it inspires them.

Enact (5 min)

Prep: Hand out Action Plan sheet and Action Plan Instructions.

Instructions:

Review the instructions below and have students selection actions..

Action Plan Instruction Sheet

Read and think about the actions:

- Which actions would you like to do?
- Which seem like you could do them?
- Which seem like fun?
- Which seem as if they will really make a difference?

Decide which actions to take.

• Decide which actions you will do with your buddy and which you will do by yourself.

Remember to:

- Show your parent(s)/guardian(s) your action plan when you get home and ask them to support you. Think of what support you want from them. Ask them how they want to support you.
- Check in with your buddy at least one time this week.
- You can change your action plans.
- You can catch up on any unfinished actions at anytime.
- Take pictures or document what you do so you can share it!

Exit (5 min)

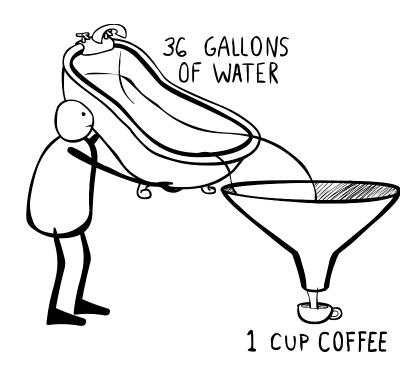
Closing Circle

Have the students form a circle and put their hands in the center again. Bring your hands to the ground and send blessings to the earth. As you raise your hands to the level of each other, bless each other and as you raise your hands up and out, send blessings to the rest of Creation.

Blessing



God – you've blessed us with a beautiful creation and with the knowledge that we are mistreating it as well. Strengthen us to make the commitment to do the right thing for your planet – now and throughout our lives. And bless us as we try. AMEN.



WE WANNA KNOW...

Congratulations on completing Session 3! How did it go? How much time did the exercises actually take? What worked? What didn't? What do you think would work better?

Let us know at: www.storyofstuff.org/teach.php

Session 3: Readings

Introduction

- 1.1 "We saw all of the things that have to happen in order for our economy to keep growing and growing, how it depends on our consuming as much as possible as fast as possible, how the way our stuff is being produced is trashing the planet, poisoning us, and how we're not having any fun while we're at it. It's not a pretty picture.
- 1.2 Today we're going to learn how to start appreciating the secret life of a few more ordinary things in our lives our clothing, books, jewelry, electronic gadgets, and cosmetics so we can start to see the whole story behind the things that surround us. When we can really see how God's Creation is affected by our consumption habits, it becomes clear that caring for Creation requires us to change those habits. It's not easy. Our habits are deep. But together and with the help of God, we can make changes in our lives that will offer respect to the earth and bring us greater fulfillment.

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Bible Text

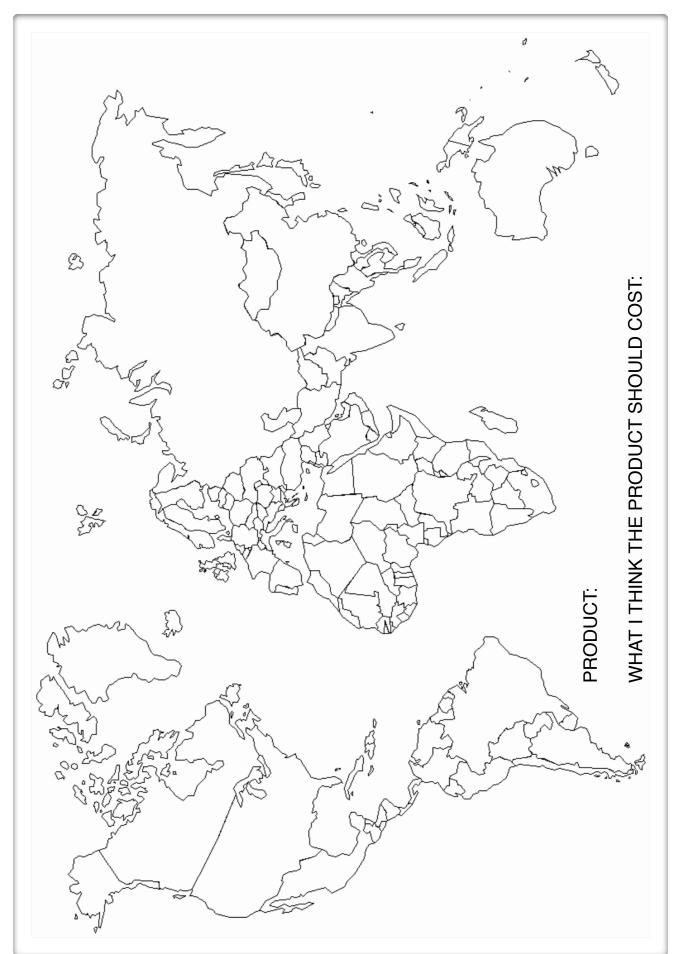
Genesis 1:28

God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'

Genesis 2:15

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and tend it.

AN UNFORTUNATE CREATION STORY; SESSION THREE



Cotton T-Shirt

Instructions

AN UNFORTUNATE OREATION STORY; SESSION THREE

- 1. Read through the hand-out marking key/interesting points to use in your presentation, for the cost and for the map.
- 2. Highlight 3 5 important points to convey to the group and add them to the map.
- 3. Estimate what you think the cost of the product should be.
- 4. Design your presentation for conveying the important points you chose and sharing your conclusion about the True Cost.

The journey from cotton crop to t-shirt is a long one that spans the globe and is filled with social and environmental costs that are hidden from view. These certainly don't show up in the \$5.99 price tag at Target.

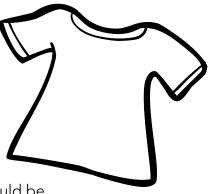
To start the journey we have to look at where our cotton is grown. Right now, most cotton is grown is the US, Uzbekistan, Australia, China, India and small African countries like Benin and Burkina Faso. And we're making a ton of it, 25 million tons to be exact. Each year we produce 25 million tons of cotton globally which is enough to make 15 t-shirts for every single person on earth.

Growing all this cotton means that we are also using a ton of water. Cotton is a very, very, very thirsty crop. In fact, some communities are driving themselves into drought growing cotton for our t-shirts because it uses so much water. People aren't getting enough water to drink because the cotton crops are taking it!

Half of the water for our t-shirt obsession comes from other countries, which means we are using and polluting their water to make our Stuff. Not only are we using tons of water, but it turns out t-shirt making is a pesticide-laden business. The majority of the world's cotton crops are coated in pesticides. In fact, cotton crops use 25% of the world's insecticides. For every pound of cotton harvested, in the US, about one-third of a pound of pesticides have been sprayed on the crops.

All of the pesticides sprayed on these crops don't just kill bugs; they harm workers, the planet and neighboring communities. Cotton farm workers and neighboring communities bear the brunt of this burden. They frequently suffer from nerve diseases and vision problems because of the number of toxic chemicals they are exposed to in their work.

And all that happens before it's even turned into a t-shirt!



Cotton T-Shirt Cont.

Then you need tons of energy to take it from raw cotton to a t-shirt (which is fueled by oil drilling or dirty coal or likely something else nasty). Then you put all that cotton in the cotton gin, bale the cotton, fluff the cotton, press the cotton, and finally turn it into thread.

When we finally have that thread, we usually bleach the cotton even if we're going to dye it, usually using chlorine. Chlorine, bummer! Chlorine is toxic all by itself and when it leaves as wastewater it can become a neurotoxin and carcinogen. That means it causes cancer and impairs the way your brain works.

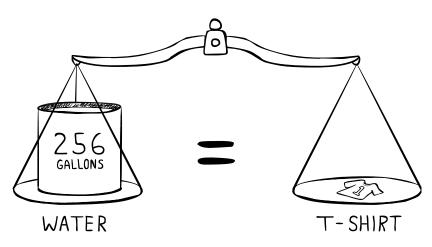
Once the cotton has been bleached and dyed and woven into fabric we want to make it as easy to take care of as possible, so we spray it down with formaldehyde (yep, like they put frogs in to preserve them before you dissect them) to make it "easy care" fabric. This use of formaldehyde might make our t-shirts soft, wrinkle-resistant, stain and odor resistant, fireproof, mothproof, and antistatic but it also causes respiratory problems, burning eyes, cancer and allergic skin reactions.

At this point, we finally have the fabric to make the t-shirt. Hooray? That fabric gets shipped to a factory or a sweatshop where folks in Haiti or China or Mexico work long days for low wages. Even with all the awareness we now have about dismal working conditions, it's still true that many factory workers are teens working 11 hour-days for 10-13 cents an hour. That's \$1.10/day. For example, in Haiti, where workers have been struggling for years for better working conditions, the legal minimum wage is still only \$3.75 a day!

Once the t-shirt has been whipped together by someone somewhere else working for next to nothing, its shipped to you in the US to find its way to you for under \$20.

What do you think the true cost of a t-shirt should be after reading the information below?

AN UNFORTUNATE CREATION STORY; SESSION THREE



AN UNFORTUNATE OREATION STORY: SESSION THREE

Cell Phone

Instructions

- 1. Read through the hand-out marking key/interesting, points to use in your presentation, for the cost, and for the map.
- 2. Highlight 3-5 important points to convey to the group and add them to the map.
- 3. Estimate what you think the cost of the product should be.
- 4. Design your presentation for conveying the important points you chose and sharing your conclusion about the True Cost.

How did the world work before cell phones? While the thought may boggle the mind, equally boggling is the incredible journey that the various components of our cell phones take, and their environmental and social impact to get to us.

Just by looking at one you can probably tell that cell phones are made of plastic, metals and some other hard-to-describe stuff. To be specific, most cell phones are made of 40% metals, 40% plastics, and 20% trace materials and ceramics. All that stuff had to come from somewhere. As a cell phone is nearly half metal that means the metal had to be mined somewhere; that "somewhere" is usually Africa and South America.

One of the vital components in cell phone production is a metal called coltan, which is used in the circuit boards; 80% of the world's supply of coltan or columbite–tantalite is found in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Like Annie mentions in the film, coltan mining in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is contributing to a continued civil war over the resource. Another metal in cell phone production is gold. That's right, GOLD! Which is mostly mined in South American and Africa.

It might be hard to tell at first but there is enough gold in 200 cell phones to make a nice sized ring. It turns out gold mining is a pretty nasty process that pollutes water, destroys natural habitats, uproots communities, and leaches toxins into the environment. In addition to gold and coltan, most of our cell phones also have copper, beryllium, lead, nickel, and zinc, which all have to be extracted from the earth, putting both the planet and workers at risk.

Mining is a super toxic practice involving cyanide and tons of other nasty chemicals that leach into the groundwater of surrounding communities creating devastating environmental and health impacts. Mining is also dangerous to humans; it is one of the 10 most dangerous jobs in America with over 1,000 deaths in the last 15 years.

Cell Phone Cont.

Another component of the phone is petroleum-based plastics. This means that we're also tearing up the Tar Sands in Canada and destroying rainforest in the Amazon to get all the oil it takes to make all the plastic. The metal and plastics are combined to make a super tiny circuit board that makes our cell phones do all of the magical things they do. In addition to being magic it turns out those circuit boards are also...you guessed it...toxic! A number of plastics like PVC (polyvinyl chloride – one of the most toxic chemicals we know) and metals like lead (another super toxic metal) are persistent pollutants that build up in the ecosystem and in our bodies.

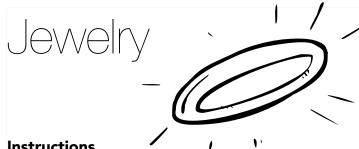
Eventually those circuit boards and plastic casings are snapped together with an LCD screen and a battery and voila! A cell phone! And...a ton more toxic stuff! The LCD (liquid crystal display) screens in our phones, so cool and high-tech, are made with mercury (another extremely toxic metal) and various man-made chemicals that are so high-tech we don't even know what they do.

The batteries come in all different sizes and styles: lithium ion, nickel cadmium, lead acid but they all have one thing in common—they all require more mining which is just more of the same destruction, displacement, and pollution.

Cell phones are really cool. There is no denying it! But there is also no denying the fact that they are extremely toxic and contribute to all kinds of environmental destruction. With over 1.3 billion cell phones in use across the globe, it's worth pondering how we could do this better.

We can pay less than \$100 dollars for a cell phone.

What do you think the true cost of cell phone should be after reading the information above?



Instructions

- 1. Read through the hand-out marking key/interesting, points to use in your presentation, for the cost, and for the map.
- 2. Highlight 3 5 important points to convey to the group and add them to the map.
- 3. Estimate what you think the cost of the product should be.
- 4. Design your presentation for conveying the important points you chose and sharing your conclusion about the True Cost.

Our jewelry can hold a lot of meaning for us. We cherish the gold cross we might have gotten from our parents, a class ring, something from a special love. If only it were that simple. Unfortunately, in addition to the beauty and meaning our jewelry has, there is also a true cost to the planet. Let's see what it took to get those rings onto our fingers.

First we have to extract the gold. As a metal, most gold we use is mined and 75% of the gold we mine is used for jewelry. While gold is found around much of the globe, South Africa is the biggest supplier currently providing at least a guarter of the world's gold.

Mining as it's most commonly practiced is a horribly polluting and toxic process. Gold is mined in the following manner:

- The little pieces of gold (ore) are taken directly from the Earth
- Cyanide (a deadly chemical) is poured on top of a big pile of gold ore, separating the toxic metals like cadmium, lead, and mercury from the gold (any guesses where those metals go?).
- The gold is taken out of a big toxic puddle of heavy metals and cyanide
- This toxic puddle gets jumbled together with all the mining waste to create a big, toxic mess which often ends up in rivers and lakes and creates environmental and health concerns for communities living near the mines. Yikes!
- Two-thirds of the gold we use is newly mined in this super wasteful, toxic way.

Just one gold ring generates about 20 tons of mining waste. That's equivalent to four pick-up trucks or a very fat (and angry) elephant.

Not to mention the fact that mining is a dangerous job, in the top ten most dangerous jobs in the world. Workers are often put in extremely unsafe conditions.

Jewelry Cont.

While diamonds are pretty, what the diamond trade has done to Sierra Leone is not. Because of their value, they create violent social upheaval. Diamonds are sometimes referred to as "conflict diamonds" or "blood diamonds" because they create violent wars over economic resources.

The attempt to control the diamond mining (and its financial profits) played a significant role in fueling the 11-year civil war in Sierra Leone. Trade in diamonds and other natural resources has underwritten some of the worst war crimes in the past two decades.

You can buy a gold ring for under \$100.

What do you think would reflect the true cost of our jewelry to the countries and land where they're produced?



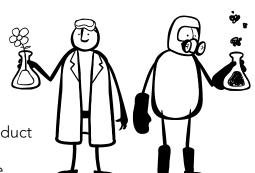
Cosmetics/ Personal "Care" Products

Instructions

- Read through the hand-out marking key/ interesting points to use in your presentation, for the cost, and for the map.
- 2. Highlight 3 5 important points to convey to the group and add them to the map.

3. Estimate what you think the cost of the product should be.

4. Design your presentation for conveying the important points you chose and sharing your conclusion about the True Cost.



Most of us use lots of personal care products everyday. Every day the average woman uses 12 products containing 168 chemical ingredients while the average man uses 6 products with 80 different chemicals. We want to smell, look, and feel good. So we shampoo our hair, slather on sunscreen, roll on deodorant, apply mascara, and put on Chapstick. But what is all this stuff we're putting on our bodies? Reading the ingredients list on any of your cosmetics or personal care products doesn't give us much of a clue? For most of us, it's just a long list of strange chemicals.

With cosmetics and personal care products, extraction is a big issue. Let's start with just the container. Most products use a petroleum-based plastic container. This means that we're tearing up the Tar Sands in Canada and destroying rainforest in the Amazon to get access to all the oil it takes to make all the plastic for those containers.

Then there is what goes in those containers, there's a huge range of products used for "personal care," and while the extraction process varies greatly for each one, the production process is pretty consistent across the board. Consistently toxic! In the US, the stuff that we slather onto our bodies to take good care of ourselves turns out to practically be poison. The chemicals in them are linked to cancer, birth defects and other serious health problems. In a study done in 2005 of thousands of personal care products, they found:

- One-third of all products tested contain at least one ingredient linked to cancer
- Almost half the tested products contained at least one ingredient that is harmful to the reproductive system
- One half include penetration enhancer that help them (and all the toxic chemicals) move deeper into the body faster

Cosmetics/ Personal "Care" Products

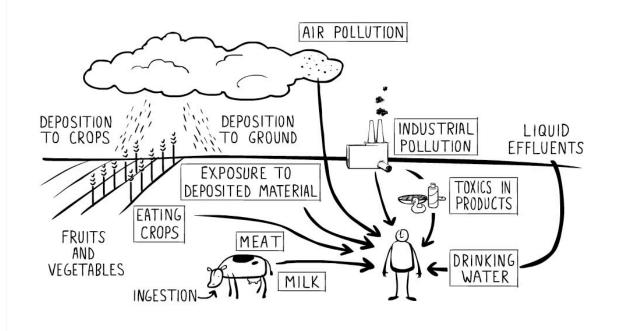
How can this be? Isn't there anybody regulating this? The answer is, "No." There is no neutral agency overseeing the cosmetic industry to insure our safety. It's a virtual free for all. The Cosmetic Ingredient Review Panel is the only organization responsible for testing the safety of these products. This panel is part of the cosmetic industry itself (you know, the ones who profit when we buy the stuff). Why should we trust them when they're the ones who profit from sales? As of 2005 CIR, had tested only 13% of the products we use daily. That means 87% of the chemicals we put on our bodies are completely untested.

You can get a bottle of lotion for under \$10.

What should it really cost?

NOTE: This is scary stuff! Luckily, thanks to the great work of some really dedicated people who started their own cosmetic watchdog organization, you can look up your products and see what's in them on the internet (go to Skin Deep and GoodGuide). The most effective way to fight against having these chemicals in our products is to make laws that keep toxics out and that keep our bodies and our families free from cancer and reproductive health issues.

EXPOSURE PATHWAYS OF TOXIC POLLUTANTS



Session 3: Action Plan **Create/Express** Poem - Write a poem about the lifecycle of one of your favorite things. (2 pts) ☐ Make it up – Make a piece of art – only out of stuff you find in a recycling bin. (2 pts) Communicate Talk Stuff - Talk to 3 people about where their stuff comes from, what's in it, who makes it. Write the names of the people and a note about what kinds of stuff you discussed you spoke to in your notebook. (2 pts) Learn/Get Smart Mhat's in it? - Visit to the SkinDeep Database or GoodGuide and figure out what's in the products you use every day. Make a list. www.cosmeticsdatabase.com www.goodguide.com (2 pts) Mountain Tops - Check out I Love Mountains: "What's My Connection to Mountaintop Removal?" to see whether the energy in your home, church, or school is fueled by moutaintop removal. http://ilovemountains.org/myconnection/ (2 pts) Try Something New Stop and think - Every time you want to buy something, stop for a minute, look at the object you want, and consider the people and places that were affected by that thing. Is the real cost of having that object worth it to you? Do you really need it? What else could fill the same need but have less of an impact? Make a list of the things you didn't buy because of this. (3 pts) **Have Insights** A new lens - Look around you at all the stuff you and your family own and think of all the people and places involved in producing it. Reflect in your journal about how it feels to know this. How would your life be different if you let yourself feel this whenever you shop. (2 pts) Be a Leader At home A Stuff audit - Do a stuff audit of your living room and mark out on a map where your families stuff comes from and hang it on the fridge for your whole family to see (3 pts)

Session 3: Action Plan Cont.

Be a Leader

In the congregation

E-stewardship - Do a bit of research online to find an e-steward where you can responsibly recycle electronics. Talk to the people at church about making a box to collect old, broken cell phones in your church.

Check out http://www.e-stewards.org/ (3 pts)

Tips and Tools...

- Check out your products on www.GoodGuide.com before you make a purchase to give you a better sense of the environmental, social, and health impacts of a product.
- Out on the town? Take a look at the Center for New American Dream's pocket guides to help you make decisions when you are out and about: http://www.newdream.org/marketplace/pocket_guides.php

Remember to take pictures of anything you did to share and put on the mural.

Total # of Points____

SESSION 4: DON'T BUY IT!

LET THERE BE...STUFF?
A SPIRIT-FILLED RESPONSE TO A CONSUMER-CRAZED WORLD
A Faith-Based Program for Christian Teens



created by





SESSION 4: OVERVIEW

ENTER AND CONNECT (8 MIN)

- Opening prayer
- Promise Poster
- Check-in
- Homework

INTRODUCE (3 MIN)

THINK (5 MIN)

• Story of Stuff Clip

ENGAGE (26 MIN)

REFLECT (5 MIN)

Scripture

INSPIRE (1 MIN)

• Teen Activist Story

ENACT (5 MIN)

Action Plans

EXIT (5 MIN)

Circle and Blessing

Preparing for Session Four

Facilitation Preparation

Session Four is an opportunity to channel the natural rebelliousness of teens toward Earth stewardship. Help them see that there is a whole industry that sees them not as people but as consumers and is working hard to control their thoughts and behavior to make them buy things they don't need. You're inviting students to wake up out of a trance and that can be hard. They might resist the idea that ads really influence them or that wanting and getting stuff isn't the source of true happiness. You can help them see this by providing examples of times when you've bought something because the ad looked so good and it turned into a big disappointment; either because it was poorly made, set in a box in the corner, or just didn't fill the God-shaped-hole. Be transparent about your own challenges, how you are also vulnerable to ads.

Overview

In this session we explore the ways in which ads manipulate us into wanting things we don't need and how things are designed to break so we have to keep buying more new things. It helps students see through these manipulations and think for themselves so they can put their focus on the source of true happiness, their relationships with each other and God.

Goals

- Reveal the ways in which we are manipulated by the media
- Help us resist temptation
- Focus on the source of true happiness our relationship with God and others
- Give more time to the things that matter in life, rather than on consuming

Themes

Religious:

• The advertising industry provides relentless temptation for us to find happiness through material things. This runs counter to our religious values, which teach us that true happiness comes from loving relationships, compassion, service, and the pursuit of justice.

Secular:

- Our consumption habits are fueled by two sneaky concepts; perceived obsolescence and planned obsolescence.
 - Perceived obsolescence is when we think our stuff is un-cool even when it works just fine.
 - Planned obsolescence means it's so poorly made that it's "designed for the dump."

Religious Text

- Exodus 20:17
- Luke 4:5-8

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Mate	erials for Session 4
	Promise Poster
	Right Stuff Action Board Session 4
	The Story of Stuff clip
	Logos and Leaves activity
	Popular magazines
	Large piece of flip chart paper or whiteboard
	Thick colored pens
	Hand-outs
	Session 4 Readings Sheets- 1 for every 2-3 students
	Session 4 Action Plans- 1 for every student
	AT D. I.
	on 4 To Do List
U	Have Session Readings sheets copied and ready to hand out (1 for ever 2-3
_	students)
ā	Have Bible Text sheets copied and ready to hand out (1 for every 2-3 students)
Ä	Post promise poster on wall
Ä	Prepare Right Stuff Action board for Session 3 homework
ū	Set up <i>The Story of Stuff</i> clip cued for extraction to manufacturing (10:06-16:43)
Ä	Have Logos and Leaves sheet printed and ready to share
ū	Have 5-10 good popular magazines relevant to teens
	Have Action Plans ready to hand out

Bible Texts

Exodus 20:17

You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Luke 4:5-8

Then the devil led Jesus up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"

Notes on Biblical Passage

Covetousness and envy are complicated and difficult emotions. Theologians across the centuries have written about the damage that they cause both to the person who envies and the person who is the object of envy. From a pastoral perspective, our society is a complicated place when it comes to covetousness and envy for the simple reason that there is so much advertising designed to make us covet. As Jesus taught, being tempted in this way is a dangerous thing.

Consider a study by California State University in Northridge, which reported that the average US child watches television for 28 hours each week and sees 20,000 30-second commercials every year. These figures have risen consistently since the 1950's. According to the same study, the average US child spends almost twice as much time watching television than being in school (900 hours per year in school, and 1,500 hours per year watching television. While ads promote the benefits of different products, their basic message is identical: Getting stuff brings fulfillment, the more stuff the better. We live in a culture that is constantly making our children covet material things and, engendering envy. We and our children are facing the same temptation that Jesus faced, but thousands of times each month.

So is there any truth to the message we're being bombarded with night and day? Does consuming stuff have anything to do with happiness? Derek Bok, the former president of Harvard tells us "no." Consumption has risen over 50% since the 1950's. Yet, his research shows that "since the early seventies, the percentage of Americans who describe themselves as either "very happy" or "pretty happy" has remained virtually unchanged." The truth is, we aren't any happier than we were with half the stuff we have today.

It's not our intention to deny the blessing that material comforts offer. May we all have the pleasure of listening to music on iPods and enjoying other beautiful things! But we also don't want to forget what our faith teaches about the basis of true happiness. The Bible tells us that enduring fulfillment exists in the expression of service and compassion, faith and friendship, meaningful vocation and loving relationships. We're left with a tension between cultural pressures that equate consumption with happiness, and religious teachings that see fulfillment issuing from very different sources and behaviors. Instead of seeking happiness by buying more stuff, we can find happiness by helping to end the unconscious, compulsive need for more stuff and the systems that perpetuate it.

Covetousness and consumerism fit well together, but ethics and envy, justice and jealousy don't. Perhaps God warns against envy because in the end, it can't deliver the happiness it promises. Living in a world that barrages us with this lie, leaves us with the question, "What do we believe about the claims that advertisements make, and what are we going to teach our youth about this?"

What's your response?

SESSION 4 - Don't Buy It!



Enter and Connect - (8 min)

Opening prayer (1 min)



God, you know better than we do what makes us happy, and you understand the ways that we are so vulnerable to being misled and confused. Help us to gain a deeper understanding of what really makes us happy, and to shape our lives to make that real for ourselves. We pray this in Jesus' name, AMEN.

- Look at the Promise Poster together and ask students to raise the hand with the promise string on it if they intend to keep the promises during this session..
- Check-in: What was it like for you this week to know the secret life of your everyday stuff?
- Homework Check Ask who did their homework. In pairs (not their buddies), have them tell each other what they did and how it went. (2 min each) Back in the large group, have them each say how many points they earned that week (tally the points on the tally sheet) and choose a highlight to share. Have them post any pictures they brought on the Right Stuff Action board.
- Hand out Session 4 Readings and Bible Text sheets.

Introduce (3 min)

Recap the previous week, if needed. Ask the students:



What did we do last week? What did we learn?

Have students take turns reading, one reader per paragraph:

1.1 - "We learn a lot about Jesus in the Bible, but in none of the Four Gospels do any of the writers tell us about the clothes he wore, or the things he owned. They show us how strong and deep his friendships were and his amazing capacity to love and heal people. But not one of them thought his possessions or appearance was an important expression of who he really was or what he came to say. Think about that! God gave Jesus what he needed. Not Prada. Not Gucci. Not Banana Republic, or American Eagle, or Gap. Just warm, comfortable clothes, good tools, and friends to share his journey.



1.2 - If our obsession with stuff didn't come from the teachings of Jesus where did it come from? What made us want designer labels and cell phone apps? What made us think we were lame if we didn't have the fastest computer or the hottest jeans? And what made us spend more time consuming the world than caring for it and each other? In this session we're going to talk about how we're being bombarded by messages that try to manipulate us into feeling bad about ourselves and wanting things we don't really need, which don't give us true happiness, and which are trashing the planet. And we're going to show them we're smarter than they are. That we see through their lies and that we're capable of making our own choices to find real happiness focusing on the things that really matter and taking better care of Creation while we're at it.

Think (5 min)

Prep: Set up Story of stuff clip on extraction and production (10:06-16:43)

- Tell students they're going to watch a section of the video with the themes you'll be focusing on in this session.
- Watch the clip.
- Debrief (1 min) What do you think?

Engage (26 min)

Part 1 - Leaves and Logos (1 min)

Prep: Have Leave and Logos image ready

Instructions:

- Show the large group the Logos and Leaves sheets without labels.
- Ask the group to identify what each one is? What kind of plant does the leaf belong to? What company is the logo representing? Most groups have a hard time identifying the plants but no problem identifying the logos.

Ask:



- What do you think that means about how businesses have taken your attention from Creation?
- How do you think they manage to get so much of our attention?

Engage (26 min.)

Part 2 - Ad-busting (5 min.)



If the add uses a model it implies that you will be more like him/her, or more desirable to him/her if you buy the product. Have the students describe the qualities that the images or models in the ad convey and how they make it seem like the product will endow anyone who owns it with those qualities.

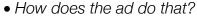
Prep: Have magazines ready to hand out.

Instructions:

- Pass out magazines
- Invite students to select ads that they think are particularly manipulative.
- Have one of them hold up an ad while the whole group explores how the ad is manipulative. There is time for about 3 ads.

Ask the following questions:

- What does the ad imply the person will get, feel, or have by buying the product?
- Who does this ad imply a person will BE if they have the product?



- What does the ad imply you don't have enough of without the product?
- Is the product really necessary? What will it really give you?
- What does God think about the message the advertisement is sending?



Part 3 – Skits (20 min)

Prep: It's nice but not required to bring any costume elements, hats, scarves, bags, etc. for this.

Instructions:

SESSION FOUR; DON'T BUY IT!

Divide the group into 3 smaller groups.

Instruct students make up a fake commercial selling anything they want. They won't have time to memorize lines, so have them decide on an outline instead of a script and make it up as they go along. The skit should include the commercial and the response of someone watching it, who sees right through the manipulation and doesn't buy it. Tell students to show the advertisers that they don't control you, that you have a mind of your own and can buck the trends. (7 min)

Have them perform the skit for the whole group. (3 min/group).

Tip: to make it go quickly, have students go around and count off in threes (one, two, three, one two three...)



Tip: Give them a warning a minute before their time is up so they can wrap up.

Reflect (15 min)

Part 1 - Coveting (5 min)

Prep: Hand out Session 4 Reading sheets

You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour. (Exodus 20:17)

Have students take turns reading, one paragraph each:

1.3 - If we were to summarize the Ten Commandments in kid's language how would you say it? The first ones are easy: "Don't lie" and "Listen to your Mommy and Daddy." But what about the last one? Exodus 20:17 says, "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor." (it's safe to assume that includes his stereo equipment and car). How would you communicate that to a child? One answer is, "Be happy with what you've got." God wants us to appreciate all that we have; to be thankful, not greedy.



1.4 - Getting something new can feel really good. Who doesn't love the thrill of opening presents on Christmas? God doesn't want to deny you the things that bring you joy. He doesn't have anything against the simple pleasures of life. In fact, he provides them for us all the time. What God really wants is to give each of us a bigger life, one that has more joy and meaning and less negative impact on the world. He wants us to spend our time enjoying our friends and families and celebrating Creation, that's what brings us long-term happiness. God's love for us and for our world is the only real certainty in this uncertain world. And the joy of serving his is better than anything we can get at the mall.

Part 2 - What Makes You Happiest? (10 min)

Prep: Notepaper and pens, a big piece of paper and colored pens.

Instructions:

- 1. Pass out notepaper and pens.
- 2. Ask students to privately list all the things that have made them happy in the last week, which didn't cost money? (2 min)
- 3. Then, invite two students to serve as scribes, writing on a two separate large pieces of paper in front of the room.
- 4. One scribe will title his sheet "Favorite Possessions." The other scribe writes, "Sources of Happiness" at the top of their list.

Reflect (15 min)

- 5. The scribes then invite students to take turns adding one item to each list as they write them down, alternating between lists.
- 6. Once the pages are full, ask students the following questions:



- What are the most important things on these lists? What would be the hardest to live without?
- What kinds of happiness do you get from having possessions? What doesn't this list of possessions give you?
- What kinds of happiness do you get from having the things on the other list? How long does that usually last? What don't those things give you?



Tip: It's normal to find a form of happiness in possessions. Make sure to observe that this kind of happiness can be pretty short-lived. Compare that to how enduring the happiness is that comes from our connections to each other, God, and Creation, and in expressing ourselves without spending money.

Inspire (1 min)

Prep: Have students ready to read from the Session 4 Readings sheet.

Instructions:

1. Read this:



We all know it can be really hard not to covet thy neighbor's brand new awesome hoody or whatever it is that week and to be thankful for the one we got handed down from our older brother or sister. But some people are defining and making their own fashion.

2. Have students take turns reading, one paragraph each:

DIY Prom http://www.youthradio.org/news/no-cash-prom-fash



SESSION FOUR: DON'T BUY IT!

1.5 - The walls are plastered with prom pictures and clippings from newspapers and fashion magazines. And at 10:15 at Lincoln High School in Stockton, California, dozens of fashion design students take their seats and go to town on sewing machines...

Inspire (1 min)

1.6 - One girl alters a friend's jeans for a few extra bucks, and others are making hoodies. Stephanie Hernandez is one of six students designing her own prom dress. She's an outside-the-box fashionista who's known in the class for pulling off inexpensive fashion feats, like the dress she designed for winter formal. "My parents told me they had a budget for my dress and all the dresses I wanted were really expensive," so Hernandez decided "To make my own out of teen vogue magazines. And it was really cheap, it only cost me \$10."



- 1.7 Ten dollars for the packing tape she used to assemble magazine cut outs into a strapless cocktail dress. Now Stephanie Hernandez is splurging a bit for the prom by making a duct tape dress for 20 bucks!" I think when you spend less money and are more resourceful your dress ends up being more unique and memorable than if you spend a lot of money and you tuck it behind your closet and never see it again."
- 3. Ask students how it inspires them.



Enact (5 min)

Prep: Hand out Action Plan sheet and Another Way sheets.

Instructions:

1. Tell them about the Group Mission.

Group Mission: Spending Freeze!

Tell the group that you're going to all do an action together this week: Spending Freeze. The challenge is to reduce their consumption for the week by not spending any money on non-essentials – everything except what they need for school, nourishment, and safety. Tell them to bring a list of all the things they normally buy but didn't that week.

Enact (5 min)

Prep: Hand out Action Plan sheet and Action Plan Instructions.

Instructions:

Review the instructions.

Action Plan Instruction Sheet

Read and think about the actions:

- Which actions would you like to do?
- Which seem like you could do them?
- Which seem like fun?
- Which seem as if they will really make a difference?

Decide which actions to take.

• Decide which actions you will do with your buddy and which you will do by yourself.

Remember to:

- Show your parent(s)/guardian(s) your action plan when you get home and ask them to support you. Think of what support you want from them. Ask them how they want to support you.
- Check in with your buddy at least one time this week.
- You can change your action plans.
- You can catch up on any unfinished actions at anytime.
- Take pictures or document what you do so you can share it!

Exit (5 min)

Closing Circle: Palms Up and Down Prayer

Gather the participants in a circle. Give each participant an opportunity to share one thing that he or she learned in today's session. Go around the group a second time and give each person an opportunity to share on thing that he or she would like to have lifted up in prayer. Ask them to hold out their left hands with palms facing up. Then ask each person to place his or her right hand (palm down) on top of the hand of the person on his or her right. Say the following to the group:



The circle represents our community of faith. In this community we are always supporting people around us (call everyone's attention to their left hands) and we are letting our brothers and sisters in Christ support us (call everyone's attention to their right hands).

Exit (5 min)

Blessing



God, thank you for the chance to learn about the ways we get tricked into thinking that certain things will give us the happiness and fulfillment that only you can really provide. Now help us to put this knowledge to work to build strong, good lives for ourselves. AMEN.

WE WANNA KNOW...

Congratulations on completing Session 4! How did it go? How much time did the exercises actually take? What worked? What didn't? What do you think would work better?

Let us know at: www.storyofstuff.org/teach.php



Session 4: Readings

- 1.1 We learn a lot about Jesus in the Bible, but in none of the Four Gospels do any of the writers tell us about the clothes he wore, or the things he owned. They show us how strong and deep his friendships were and his amazing capacity to love and heal people. But not one of them thought his possessions or appearance was an important expression of who he really was or what he came to say. Think about that! God gave Jesus what he needed. Not Prada. Not Gucci. Not Banana Republic, or American Eagle, or Gap. Just warm, comfortable clothes, good tools, and friends to share his journey.
- 1.2 If our obsession with stuff didn't come from the teachings of Jesus where did it come from? What made us want designer labels and cell phone apps? What made us think we were lame if we didn't have the fastest computer or the hottest jeans? And what made us spend more time consuming the world than caring for it and each other? In this session we're going to talk about how we're being bombarded by messages that try to manipulate us into feeling bad about ourselves and wanting things we don't really need, which don't give us true happiness, and which are trashing the planet. And we're going to show them we're smarter than they are. That we see through their lies and that we're capable of making our own choices to find real happiness focusing on the things that really matter and taking better care of Creation while we're at it.
- 1.3 If we were to summarize the Ten Commandments in kid's language how would you say it? The first ones are easy: "Don't lie" and "Listen to your Mom and Dad." But what about the last one? Exodus 20:17 says, "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor." (it's safe to assume that includes his stereo equipment and car). How would you communicate that to a child? One answer is, "Be happy with what you've got." God wants us to appreciate all that we have; to be thankful, not greedy.
- 1.4 Getting something new can feel really good. Who doesn't love the thrill of opening presents on Christmas? God doesn't want to deny you the things that bring you joy. He doesn't have anything against the simple pleasures of life. In fact, he provides them for us all the time. What God really wants is to give each of us a bigger life, one that has more joy and meaning and less negative impact on the world. He wants us to spend our time enjoying our friends and families and celebrating Creation, that's what brings us long-term happiness. God's love for us and for our world is the only real certainty in this uncertain world. And the joy of serving his is better than anything we can get at the mall.



Session 4: Readings

DIY Prom http://www.youthradio.org/news/no-cash-prom-fash

- 1.5 The walls are plastered with prom pictures and clippings from newspapers and fashion magazines. And at 10:15 at Lincoln High School in Stockton, California, dozens of fashion design students take their seats and go to town on sewing machines...
- 1.6 One girl alters a friend's jeans for a few extra bucks, and others are making hoodies. Stephanie Hernandez is one of six students designing her own prom dress. She's an outside-the-box fashionista who's known in the class for pulling off inexpensive fashion feats, like the dress she designed for winter formal. "My parents told me they had a budget for my dress and all the dresses I wanted were really expensive," so Hernandez decided "To make my own out of teen vogue magazines. And it was really cheap, it only cost me \$10."
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Session 4: Action Plan

Group Mission

Spending Freeze - The challenge is to reduce your consumption for the week by not spending any money on non-essentials – everything except what you need for school, nourishment, and safety. Bring a list of all the things you normally buy but didn't this week. (3 pts)

Create

God's Ad - Make your own ad for God to get people to spend more time taking care of Creation and spending time doing things that make them really happy. (3 pts)

Communicate

- Catch the lies Go to the mall with your buddy and take pictures of some of the worst ads you can find, take pictures and /or tell us why (3 pts)
- Wake up a friend Tell your friends what you've learned the next time you pass an ad or they say they absolutely have to have something new. (2 pts)

Worship

Real happiness - next time you feel like shopping or like someone else has something you absolutely have to have, imagine you're seeing yourself through God's eyes and ask yourself why you want it and if it really fills the need you think it does. What do you really need in order to be happy? Pray to God that you remember that! (1 pt).

Get Smart

- Research this! Get more information about how businesses market to teens by watching Merchants of Cool online here: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/cool/. (2 pts)
- Make a note in your notebook of 3 times you noticed the media trying to manipulate you without even leaving the house. (1 pt)

Try Something New

- Organize a clothing swap with your friends. You can trade clothes, bags, shoes, jewelry, etc. (3 pts)
- Instead of buying something new, make it from something you already have, but aren't using anymore into it (i.e. turn an old pair of jeans into a bag). (3 pts)
- Catch yourself every time you think you need to buy something in order to feel better about yourself, and what else you can do to feel good about yourself outside of shopping. (1 pt)
- Take an ad break. See how hard it is to avoid ads. (1 pt)





Session 4: Action Plan Cont.

Have Insights

- Don't Buy It! Next time you think you want something, see if you can identify the ways in which you have been manipulated into wanting it.
- Take an Inventory Go through everything you normally buy during a month and take an honest look at how many of those things you buy in order to feel like you're cool. Cross off everything you don't need. (2 pts.)
- Find your soft spot Where you are personally susceptible to being manipulated? What is the cost to you? To the world? (1 pt.)
- Write On! Choose an object you really like that you bought recently. Reflect on and write your responses to the following questions:
 - What difference did I think this would make in my life?
 - How did I think it would make me feel?
 - How did I think other people would see me because of it?
 - Did it work?
 - How long has it lasted?
 - Has the feeling changed since I first got it?
 - What does it do for me now?

Share any insights with the full group at the next session

Tips and Tools...



- Instead of buying something on impulse, put it on layaway for a few days and see if you can live without it.
- Don't fall for the latest trends. Buy clothes that will last and stay in style.
- Next time you go clothes shopping, instead of hitting the mall, try going to Goodwill or another place that sells previously worn clothes. You'll be amazed what you find.
- Use old clothes to make oneof-a-kind items like handbags and quilts.
- Before you buy a new electronics gadget, check to see how much your desire for it comes from the "Golden Arrow" of consumption The Story of Stuff talks about. Set a new trend by using technological dinosaurs until they really bite the dust.

Be a Leader

With peers

Take a new direction - when you're with friends and they want to go shopping,
convince them to do something outside or play a game together – something that
engages and connects you (not just zoning out in front of the TV) (3 pts.)

In your family

TV fast -	Turn the	TV in the I	iving room	off for the	week (3 pts)

In your school

Anti-ad campaign - Brainstorm ideas for an anti-ad campaign in your high school and create a poster (2 pts)

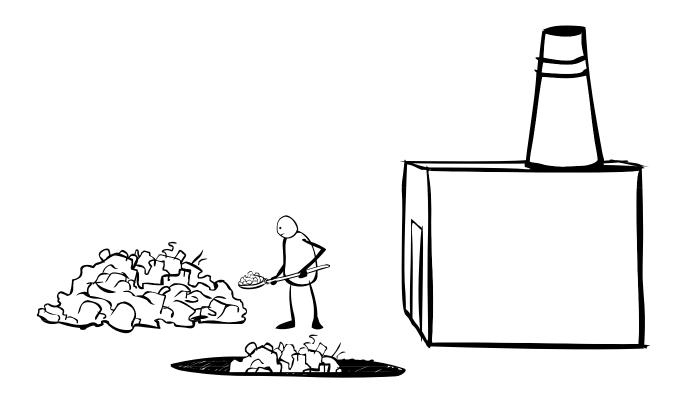
In the Congregation

Stuff swap - Talk the people at your church about having a congregation-wide stuff swap and set a date (3 pts)

Total # of Points____

SESSION 5: WASTE NOT!

LET THERE BE...STUFF?
A SPIRIT-FILLED RESPONSE TO A CONSUMER-CRAZED WORLD
A Faith-Based Program for Christian Teens



created by





SESSION 5: OVERVIEW

ENTER AND CONNECT (8 MIN)

- Opening prayer
- Promise Poster
- Check-in
- Homework

INTRODUCE (3 MIN)

THINK (10 MIN)

- Story of Stuff Clip
- Waste Quiz
- Getting the Picture

ENGAGE (20 MIN)

• Garbage Audit (Optional)

REFLECT (5 MIN)

Scripture

INSPIRE (2 MIN)

Teen Activist Story

ENACT (8 MIN)

- Action Plans
- Another Way Sheet
- Award Ballots

EXIT (3 MIN)

- Closing Circle: Lean On Me
- Blessing

Preparing for Session Five

Facilitation Preparation

For this session, you'll need to be careful to contain the garbage activity so it doesn't take the whole session. You can do it in 20 minutes and get back to the room for the rest of the session. Enroll some students to help you clean up after the session if you didn't have the chance earlier.

Don't forget to have students vote for the Earth Stewardship Awards before they leave. You'll have to do the tallying before Session 6. Be creative with your award "certificates." Make them out of ribbon or fabric scraps with a marker, or find some fun awards of your own. You'll probably want to get a head start on it.

Overview

In this session we explore what happens to our Stuff once we get rid of it. Whether we recycle it or throw it away there's a big cost to the planet and to vulnerable populations. We will follow the secret life of the same objects we learned about in Session 3 to see where each of them goes at the end of their lives. Hint: It's definitely not heaven!

Goals

- Understand the true cost of disposing of our stuff
- Understand and practice ways to reduce waste
- Understand how wasting resources is counter to God's plan for us and for the Earth

Themes

Religious:

- Wasting resources is counter to God's plan for us and for the Earth.
- God created everything with love and with a purpose and that purpose wasn't to end up in a landfill or an incinerator!

Secular:

- We are wasting like crazy. It's extremely toxic and a waste of precious resources.
- Reduce, reuse, recycle and rethink!

Religious Text

- Isaiah 24:4-6
- Isaiah 45:18

Promis	rials for Session 5 se Poster Right Stuff Action board – Session 4 Story of Stuff clip Chris Jordan photos Photos of children in Asia sorting garbage
	ge Audit A trashcan containing trash that is representative of the waste that your facility generates. A thick paper tarpaulin or large pieces of cardboard (avoid a plastic tarp) on which the trash will be poured, and which you'll dispose of at the end of the activity. Rubber gloves (one for each students)– preferably thick, reusable dishwashing/cleaning gloves, not thin latex gloves. A mop and bucket to clean up any spills. Pen and paper to record ideas Camera to document the waste
	outs Session 5 Readings Sheets and Bible Texts- for every 2-3 students Another Way Sheet Session 5 Action Plans- 1 per student Awards Ballot
	Make copies and have Session Readings Sheet ready to hand out (1 for every 2-3 students). Make copies and have Biblical Text ready to hand out (1 for every 2-3 students). Have promise poster on wall. Visit www.chrisjordan.com and select a few images from his "Running the Numbers" exhibit to share. Post Right Stuff Action board for Session 4 on wall. Set up The Story of Stuff clip cued for waste disposal section (16:44-19:01). Garbage Audit set up – Find a can of trash that is representative of the waste your facility generates. Have it ready some place where you don't mind emptying a can of garbage. We recommend doing this outside. Have the paper tarp set up next to the can and gloves ready to hand out to students. Have Action Plans ready to hand out. Have Award Ballots ready to hand out.

Biblical Text

Matthew 24:4-6

The earth dries up and withers,
the world languishes and withers;
the heavens languish together with the earth.
The earth lies polluted
under its inhabitants;
for they have transgressed laws,
violated the statutes,
broken the everlasting covenant.
Therefore a curse devours the earth,
and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt;
therefore the inhabitants of the earth dwindled,
and few people are left.

Isaiah 45:18

For thus says the LORD,
who created the heavens
(he is God!),
who formed the earth and made it;
he established it;
he did not create it a chaos,
he formed it to be inhabited!:
I am the LORD, and there is no other.

Notes on Biblical Passage

As this session shows us, it's relatively easy to avoid thinking about where all our waste ends up, and about the impact of what we throw away. Out of sight, out of mind is how most of us function. And it can be hard to change this habit. We're all so busy that finding time to think about our trash's ultimate resting place isn't high on most of our priorities.

God, on the other hand, has a different perspective. God sees the entire, big picture in stunning detail – omni-present, aware of everything. And while it's easy for us to avoid noticing the aftermath of our consumption, it's impossible for God to look away.

Notes on Biblical Passage Cont.

The passage from Isaiah 24 describes what God sees - from a God's-eye view. Not only does God see the earth's devastation – withered trees, parched soil, creatures languishing in a punishing heat with no place to rest. God also sees the inner cause of this devastation – human wrongdoing. God sees both the outwardly visible and the inward, invisible dimensions of earth's wreckage – an outer wasteland which is the result of a misguided inner self. When our waste damages Creation, we may not feel aware of the ramifications of our pollution. But God doesn't easily excuse our lack of attention to these concerns. Instead, God sees our carelessness as the precursor to earth's devastation. Our quick forgetfulness is the first step in earth's devastation.

A short verse from Isaiah 45 reminds us that God's intention for the earth is far removed from the wasteland described above. Very simply, earth's purpose is not to be a chaos – translated also as a "waste," but rather to "be inhabited," to be a home for life. And God judges our behavior based on how it contributes to this larger goal. Do our lives, our consumption habits, and the waste that we create, help Creation flourish?

God loves people and creation with abandon. God affirms this love repeatedly, reminding us often that we were created caringly, with a good purpose. Can we start by turning our own homes, and our houses of worship, into communities that treat the after-effects of our consumption with the same loving abandon that God shows us rather than thoughtlessly abandoning our waste in ways that hurt the earth?

SESSION 5 - Waste Not!



Enter and Connect - (8 min)

Opening prayer (1 min)



Gracious God, you made everything that exists and you called it good at the beginning of time, forever and ever. Help us to learn about what really happens to things when we throw them out. Remind us that our waste affects other people and the earth. And teach us that you want us to build a society that does not create waste that hurts your creation, but instead renews all things for use in your service. We pray this in Jesus' name, AMEN.

- Look at the Promise Poster together and ask students to raise the hand with the promise string on it if they intend to keep the promises during this session..
- Check-in: What was it like for you to spend the week more aware of media manipulation?
- Homework Check Ask who did their homework. In pairs (not their buddies), have them tell each other what they did and how it went. (2 min. ea.) Back in the large group, have them each say how many points they earned that week (tally the points on the tally sheet) and choose a highlight to share. Have them post any pictures they brought on the Right Stuff Action board.
- Hand out Session 5 Reading sheets.

Recap the previous week, if needed. Ask the students:



What did we do last week? What did we learn?

1. Tell them this:



Now it's time to look at what happens once we're done with our stuff. It seems simple: We throw it away, we put it in the garbage can on garbage day, and the garbage truck comes and Presto! It magically disappears. Or does it?

2. Have students take turns reading, changing readers every paragraph.



1.1 - Once it's taken away, most of us don't give our garbage another thought. We just keep filling our cans over and over again happy to have someone else dispose of it for us and to not have to look at or smell it ever again. It might be out of our sight, and off of our minds. But it's not off of the planet. It doesn't vanish into thin air or get taken to another planet. It's still here and a part of our world, which is getting piled higher and higher with our garbage.

3. Ask:



When we throw our stuff away, where does it go? Where IS away, exactly? What happens to it there? And what is the cost to the people and planet?

4. Resume student reading.



SESSION FIVE: WASTE NOT!

1.2 - In this session we're going to take good look at "away" and the real cost of the enormous pile of junk that's piling up there, When people try, they can dramatically reduce the amount of waste they produce. But it can be hard to change our habits even when we want to. It helps when we see the cost of not changing and get lots of inspiration and help for making the changes.

Think (5 min)

Prep: Set up The Story of Stuff clip on disposal (16:44-19:01)

- Tell students they're going to watch a section of the video with the themes you'll be focusing on in this session.
- Watch the clip.
- Debrief (1 min) What do you think?

Engage (26 min)





Part 1 - Waste Quiz

Tell them they'll be taking a little Waste Quiz and ask them the following questions. Provide answers after a few students have had the chance to offer their guesses.

WASTE QUIZ

Q: How much waste do you think you generate each year?

A: 4.6 pounds/day which is more than 1600 lbs. a year. That's the size of two adult gorillas!

Q: What is the most toxic man made chemical?

A: Dioxin. And we release dioxin every time we burn PVC or plastic #3 which is just one reason why incinerators are such bad news for our health and the health of the planet.

Q: How many cellphones were thrown out in the US last year?

A: 130 million. Which is especially sobering when you consider the number of toxics in our cell phones and that if we chuck our phones into landfills those toxics leaches into our groundwater or often the phones are being incinerated and releasing, you guessed it, dioxin!

Q: How many pounds of clothing does the average American throw away and how much of that ends up in landfill?

A: The average American throws away about 68 pounds of clothing and textiles each year – and about 85 percent of that ends up in landfills.

Q: How big is the largest floating garbage patch (that's a patch of garbage that has accumulated from all the stuff we've thrown into our ocean)?

A: The size of Texas, and a second patch in the Atlantic ocean was just discovered!

Engage (26 min)

Part 2 - Getting the Picture

Prep: Have Chris Jordan and International garbage picker images ready.

Instructions:

- 1. Pass out Chris Jordan images.
- 2. Ask for responses:



- •What do you think these are?
- •What do these make you think?
- •What do they make you feel?
- •How do you think God would feel about this?
- 3. Tell them this:



When you think about all of this waste, take a second to think about your stuff: your cell phone, your t-shirt, your jewelry, or your make up. We've learned where it comes from. This is where it's likely to go. Landfills. Big holes in the earth filled with everything we throw away. These are pictures of "away." They are filled with the jewelry that went out of style last week, the Tshirt that got stained, and all the plastic that's used as packaging for just about every cosmetic product we buy.

What about your cell phone? Eventually, you'll find a better model and the one you have will get trashed. Sending it to the trash will put all those toxic chemicals into the groundwater and waste all those precious metals. If you decide to recycle it, it all too often just get shipped overseas to get smashed up and burned trashing -the environment and creating huge heath risks for workers.

4. Pass out photos of sorting and living waste and ask for responses:



SESSION FIVE: WASTE NOT!

- •What do these make you think?
- •What do they make you feel?
- •What are God's feelings about these photos?
- 5. Tell them that, luckily, there are other things you can do with your Stuff and ways we can prevent the waste stream from causing more damage.

Reflect (5 min)

Prep: Hand out Biblical text.

Instructions:

- 1. Read Matthew 14:15-21
- 2. Tell students: In our society, a lot of stuff ends up creating harm to people and the planet.
- 3. Ask:
- •What is the effect of the Stuff Jesus uses in this story?
- •Is there waste in this story? How is it treated?
- 4. Tell students:



For God, the purpose of everything is to support life – just like Jesus does when he turns a little bit of food into enough to feed a huge crowd. In this story, nothing is wasted, it's gathered up to feed more people. Wouldn't it be great if the waste that we create could become food that helped support others?

Engage (20 min)

Garbage Audit (Optional)

It can help us realize the ways in which we personally contribute to the problem by taking a look at the waste we create...

SUMMARY

SESSION FIVE: WASTE NOT!

Garbage audits are an entertaining, memorable, effective way to educate people about the importance of good waste management and recycling habits, and to motivate them to take action. The goal of these audits is to identify ways that your facility can reduce the amount of garbage it generates – whether through recycling or by decreasing the amount of trash generated in the first place.

Here are some simple instructions to help you conduct a successful waste audit at your house of worship.

Step 1: Get Prepared The audit will involve pouring out a trash container onto a tarpaulin – so you need to make sure you've got the materials you'll need. We recommend that you dress in clothes which can get dirty, and that you conduct the audit in an auditorium or meeting room where there is a bare, non-carpeted floor and lots of space.

Engage (20 min)

We also recommend that you gather the following items:

- A trash can containing trash that is representative of the waste that your facility generates.
- A thick paper tarpaulin or large pieces of recycled cardboard (avoid a plastic tarp) on which the trash will be poured, and which you'll dispose of at the end of the activity.
- Rubber gloves preferably thick, dishwashing/cleaning gloves, not thin latex gloves.
- A mop and bucket to clean up any spills.

Step 2: Get Started Carefully pour out the contents of the trash can onto the tarp/cardboard and sort the waste into the following piles:

- Office paper
- Aluminum, plastic and glass
- Food scraps
- Other food-related waste e.g. paper of Styrofoam cups or plates

When you've sorted the waste into piles, assess how much of your waste falls into each of the categories above.

Step 3: Analyze your Garbage Have a student write down the suggestions for how to decrease their church's waste. These can be brought back into the classroom. Have another student in charge of photos, so they can share with the church.

Make the following plans in relation to each of the waste categories:

- Office paper can be recycled. Make sure that there are paper recycling bins everywhere that there is a regular waste bin.
- Aluminum, plastic and glass can be recycled as long as there is no food waste attached to them. For example, an empty aluminum can is recyclable, while a piece of aluminum foil with cheese from a pizza melted onto it is not recyclable. Make sure that there are can/bottle recycling bins everywhere that there is a regular waste bin.
- Food scraps can be composted you can find information about composting at http://www.composting101.com/
- Other food-related waste may in many cases be eliminated. For instance paper cups or Styrofoam mugs can be replaced by mugs or cups, which can be used over and over and washed in a dishwasher or by hand. The same is true for paper or Styrofoam plates and plastic cutlery.

Step 4: Clean Up When you've finished analyzing your garbage, pick up the paper tarp/cardboard by its corners and replace the trash, with the tarp/carboard, into the garbage can.

If they follow these four steps, and address each of the different waste categories listed above, most institutions find that they can reduce the amount of garbage that they generate by over 50%!

Inspire (2 min)

Prep: Have students ready with Session 5 Readings sheet.

If you don't think you can make a big difference in the way we treat our waste, consider the story of this young hero.

Have students take turns reading, alternating every paragraph.



Alexander Lin, E-Waste Crusader Providence, RI Age 14 www.w-i-n.ws

1.3 - Moved to action by a Wall Street Journal article detailing the growing E-Waste crisis, Alexander Lin was determined to do something. And do something he did!



Still in junior high at the time, Alex convinced his community service group Westerly Innovations Network, WIN, to see what they could do to take on E-Waste in their hometown of Providence, RI.

1.4 - To get things started, Alex launched a recycling drive that collected over 21,000 pounds of E-Waste! Alex soon established a permanent E-Waste drop-off in town. Alex then went on with the other kids from WIN to draft and advocate for a local and statewide ordinance to ban the dumping of E-Waste in Rhode Island. And he just kept on it. Recognizing the need to extend the lives of the computers we have and share the technology, Alex convinced the computer staff at his high school to make computer refurbishing part of the curriculum. He then used developed a program to share the refurbished computers to schools in his hometown of Providence, RI and also to schools in Sri Lanka and Mexico. After setting up an Internet café in Cameroon, Alex began work with the UN Environment Program to provide refurbished computers to folks across the globe.

Enact (5 min.)

Prep: Hand out Action Plans.

Instructions:

Review the instructions if needed.

Action Plan Instruction Sheet

Read and think about the actions:

- Which actions would you like to do?
- Which seem like you could do them?
- Which seem like fun?
- Which seem as if they will really make a difference?

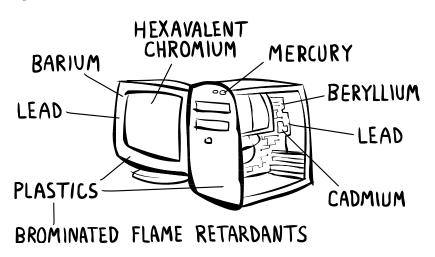
Decide which actions to take.

• Decide which actions you will do with your buddy and which you will do by yourself.

Remember to:

- Show your parent(s)/guardian(s) your action plan when you get home and ask them to support you. Think of what support you want from them. Ask them how they want to support you.
- Check in with your buddy at least one time this week.
- You can change your action plans.
- You can catch up on any unfinished actions at anytime.
- Take pictures or document what you do so you can share it!

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS IN A PC



Tell students that they will be voting on the award winners for this course and hand out the award ballots. Have them be thoughtful about how they fill them out so that students who deserve the recognition receive it. Invite them to add new categories and write someone in if they'd like. Make it both playful and serious by telling them that this is an opportunity to acknowledge the efforts everybody has made and what each person has contributed to the course. Remind them not to forget to have fun. Give them 5 min. Have them hand them in before they leave.

Exit (5 min)

Remind them that the next session is the last one and that their parent(s)/guardian(s) are being invited to come to help celebrate the completion. Hand out the letter to parents.

Closing Circle: Lean on Me

Invite everyone to stand in a circle facing the center. Then have them turn to the right and make the circle smaller so that they are inches away from the person in front and behind them. Have them put their hands on the shoulders of the person in frontthem. Then, on the count of three, tell them to sit down as if they were sitting in a chair. Let them support each other and call attention to the fact they are supporting and being supported by each other at the same time.

Blessing



God, you've blessed us with a great abundance of things – food to eat, shelter over our heads, clothing for our bodies, and much much more. Help us remember that everything which we buy, use and dispose of – all the stuff we throw out – goes on to impact other people, and strengthen us to take responsibility for our waste, and not to burden others with it. We ask this in Jesus' name, AMEN.

Follow Up

- Send an email or call parents to invite them to the last session.
- Tally award winners and prepare award certificates.

WE WANNA KNOW...

Congratulations on completing Session 4! How did it go? How much time did the exercises actually take? What worked? What didn't? What do you think would work better?

Let us know at: www.storyofstuff.org/teach.php

Session 5: Readings

- 1.1 Once it's taken away, most of us don't give our garbage another thought. We just keep filling our cans over and over again happy to have someone else dispose of it for us and to not have to look at or smell it ever again. It might be out of our sight, and off of our minds. But it's not off of the planet. It doesn't vanish into thin air or get taken to another planet. It's still here and a part of our world, which is getting piled higher and higher with our garbage.
- 1.2 In this session we're going to take good look at "away" and the real cost of the enormous pile of junk that's piling up there, When people try, they can dramatically reduce the amount of waste they produce. But it can be hard to change our habits even when we want to. It helps when we see the cost of not changing and get lots of inspiration and help for making the changes.
- 1.3 Moved to action by a Wall Street Journal article detailing the growing E-Waste crisis, Alexander Lin was determined to do something. And do something he did! Still in junior high at the time, Alex convinced his community service group Westerly Innovations Network, WIN, to see what they could do to take on E-Waste in their hometown of Providence, RI.
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PER CAPITA GARBAGE PRODUCTION

AVERAGE POUNDS PER PERSON PER DAY



Session 5: Action Plans

\bigcirc	
Create	Trash art - Make some art out of trash. Check out: http://www.makeartnottrash.com/endnotes.htm for ideas. (2 pts) Handmade Paper - Make some recycled paper out of old newspapers. Check out this website or do a Google search for directions: http://www.make-stuff.com/recycling/paper.html (2 pts)
Comm	unicate
	http://www.no-burn.org/section.php?id=90 (2 pts) Make a poster to help folks understand what gets recycled, composted and sent to the landfill. Start by looking up your local recycling facility: http://earth911.com/ (3 pts)
Get Sr	mart
_	Research zero waste – Look up strategies and ways to reduce the waste in your home, school, or church. Check out: http://www.greenfaith.org/stewardship/waste.html (2 pts)
	Take a dump trip – Find out where your local dump is by looking online. If your town doesn't have a dump find the local transfer station. Take a trip to either the dump or the transfer station and just see what happens to your stuff. Reflect on it and write your thoughts and feelings in your journal (3 pts)
Try So	mething New
ا ا	Repair something: fix your bike, replace a button on a jacket. Take a picture of it and show it. (2 pts).
	Say no to plastic - Avoid single use plastics like bottled water, straws, and yogurt
0	cups- bring your lunch in a cloth bag. Write down what you did. (2 pts) Lose weight - Weigh your family's garbage. See if you can reduce it by at least 1 lb the next week. See how low you can get your garbage. (3 pts)
Have I	Insights
	No More Away - Next time you throw something away just think about the fact that there is no away. Imagine that all the stuff you see came from nature and will one day end up in a landfill. Reflect on these questions and write your response in your journal. What does that make you feel? How would your life be different if you were always aware of that? What makes you forget? (1 pt)
Be a L	eader
With p	eers Host a Trash to Treasure party. Have friends over and turn trash into art. Check out this slideshow to get inspired: http://www.treehugger.com/files/2009/06/rethinking-trash-into-inspired-art-slideshow.php (3 pts)

Session 5: Action Plans Cont.

Be a Leader

In your family

Stop The Catalogs - Sign your family up with Catalog Choice and reduce the number of unwanted catalogs that flood your mailbox and destroy thousands and thousands of trees. Visit their website at http://www.catalogchoice.org/ (3 pts)

In your school

Green Your School - Think about ways to make your school a Zero waste school or a green school. Draft up an action plan, check out this site in Illinois to get started: http://www.greeningschools.org/resources/view_cat_teacher.cfm?id=178 (3 pts)

In your neighborhood

Mow your recycling - Call your local recycling facility and see what plastics they actually recycle. If you don't have recycling make a list of who you would call to talk about setting up a program (2 pts)

In the Congregation

Be an E-Steward - Set up a box as an e-waste pick up for cell phones at your church and then drop them off with an E-Steward. Make a poster with the changes in the church's disposal policies and what they will be doing to reduce their garbage. http://www.e-stewards.org/ (3 pts)

Remember to take pictures of anything you did to share and put them on the mural.

Another Way

Reduce, reuse, recycle and rot. The mantra may be simple but it's filled with wisdom. First you have to reduce the amount of stuff you buy, use and throw away, then you should keep on reusing it, and then (if you can't think of anything better to do with it) you can go ahead and recycle it. If it's an organic material, you can put it in the compost and let it rot. Of course, that means you have to set up a compost pile if you don't have one already.

More tips:

- Bring your own bag when you do go out shopping.
- Skip bottled water and use reusable bottles instead.
- Buy second hand when possible. Not only is it cheaper and better fort the planet, but then you'll have something one of a kind.
- Check out *The Story of Stuff's* list of 10 Little and Big Things You Can Do: http://www.storyofstuff.com/anotherway.php

Session 5: Bible Text

Matthew 24:4-6

The earth dries up and withers,
the world languishes and withers;
the heavens languish together with the earth.
The earth lies polluted
under its inhabitants;
for they have transgressed laws,
violated the statutes,
broken the everlasting covenant.
Therefore a curse devours the earth,
and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt;
therefore the inhabitants of the earth dwindled,
and few people are left.

Isaiah 45:18

For thus says the LORD,
who created the heavens
(he is God!),
who formed the earth and made it;
he established it;
he did not create it a chaos,
he formed it to be inhabited!:
I am the LORD, and there is no other.







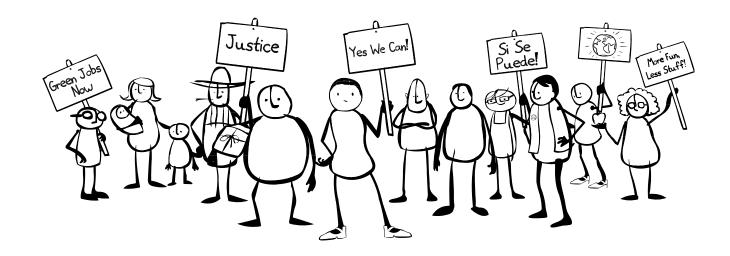
EARTH STEWARDSHIP AWARD NOMINATION FORM

Please fill in the names of your classmates to nominate them for one of Earth Stewardship Awards below. Feel free to make your own categories too!

Nomination	Award
	Best Overall Earth Steward
	Biggest Change in Behavior
	Best Communicator of A Better Way
	Most Creative
	Most Insights
	Best Sense of Humor
	Most Improved Earth Steward
	Most Sustainably Stylish
	Had The Most Fun
	Best Team Player

SESSION 6: GOING FORTH!

LET THERE BE...STUFF?
A SPIRIT-FILLED RESPONSE TO A CONSUMER-CRAZED WORLD
A Faith-Based Program for Christian Teens



created by





SESSION 6: OVERVIEW

ENTER AND CONNECT (10 MIN)

- Opening prayer
- Check-in
- Homework

INTRODUCE (10 MIN)

ENGAGE (20 MIN)

• Going Forth Mural

SHARE/ENACT (8 MIN)

Going Forth Actions

CELEBRATE (5 MIN)

- Declare Award Winners
- Decide on Presentations

EXIT (3 MIN)

- Song
- Closing Circle
- Blessing

Preparing for Session Six

Facilitation Preparation

This is the culmination of the whole course. Bring a spirit of completion and celebration to it. In the course review, you can use the review sheet at the end of the session plan as a "cheat sheet." You can include parents any way you're inspired to. Have fun! And look for ways to keep the energy going. It might be helpful to get feedback about the course from parent(s)/guardian(s) and find out how it was for them after the session.

Overview

This is our last session in the journey and it's time to celebrate what the group learned and accomplished and consider life after the course. It's an opportunity to include parent(s)/guardian(s as well. This session helps to prepare students for their next steps as Earth Stewards and make a plan to share what they've learned with others, including the congregation.

Goals

- Recognize and celebrate achievements
- Create inspiration for action beyond the course
- Make an Action Plan
- Send students forth with love!

Themes

Religious:

- Give thanks for a new vision
- Commit to God that we'll work to make that vision real

Secular:

- There is another way
- We can be good Earth Stewards and design better systems!

Religious Text

- Exodus 20:17
- Luke 4:5-8

Sessi	ion 6 To Do List
	Contact parent(s)/guardian(s) either by phone or email right after Session 5 and
	graciously invite them to the last session of the series.
	Set up snacks, music, decorations, etc. for a festive atmosphere
	Make copies of Session 6 Readings sheets – 1 for every 2-3 students
	Make 1 copy per student of:
_	Going Forth Actions List
	Going for Action Plans
	Resource Lists
	Post all murals and Right Stuff Action Boards on the wall
	Have Course Review Cheat Sheet handy
$\bar{\Box}$	Post Right Stuff Action board for Session 5
n	Post a piece of butcher paper with the title "Going Forth" on it. Make three big
_	concentric circles, like a target, with lots of room in each one for students to put
	pictures.
	Prepare completion "certificates"
ñ	Prepare award "certificates"
_	•
Mate	erials for Session 6
	on Materials
	Snacks
ñ	Music
ñ	Decorations
ñ	Butcher paper
n	Tape
片	Magazines for The Going Forth Poster
片	Colored pens
	Completion "Certificates"
片	Award "Certificates"
u	Award Certificates
Hand	outs
	Session 6 Readings Sheets
꿈	Another Way sheet – 1 per student
<u> </u>	
<i>!</i> 1	
ü	Going Forth Action Plan – 1 per student Resource list – 1 per student

SESSION 6 - Going Forth!



Enter and Connect - (10 min)

Opening prayer (1 min)



God, we gather together for our final meeting of this course today, aware of what we have learned and of our increased awareness and responsibility for the earth. Help us to celebrate our time together, the friendships we've made, what we now know, and the challenges that face us, and equip us to be your hands in the world. We ask this in Jesus' name, AMEN.

Welcome!

Prep: Have chairs for parent(s)/guardian(s) in the circle.

- Welcome parent(s)/guardian(s) and thank them for coming and for supporting their children in becoming environmental leaders. Show your gratitude!
- Have the adults introduce themselves first by saying whose parent(s)/guardian(s) they are and identifying one aspect of Creation that they appreciate.
- Then ask students to share one aspect of Creation they appreciate.
- Once everybody has spoken, acknowledge how good it is to be in a room with people who love God and Creation so much. Let the parents know that they're invited to witness, participate in some activities, but mostly to support, and celebrate the students and their work.

Homework Check

- Ask who did their homework. In pairs, have them tell each other what they did and how it went. (2 min, each) Back in the large group, have them each choose a highlight to share. Have them post their pictures on the Right Stuff Action Board for Session 5.
- Tally final homework points and when you get the chance, fill in the name of the highest point earner on the Awards "Certificate" for most points.

Prep: Have Course Review Cheat Sheet handy and have Session 6 Reader sheets handed out

Instructions:



We've been on quite a journey together to become better Earth Stewards and to learn to praise God by honoring Creation. Let's honor our journey together by telling the story of our Story of Stuff program. Parents are free to ask questions.

- 1. Go through each Session of the course and invite students to share their stories (keep it short, crisp, and under 1 min per session). See session review cheat sheet for help remembering. Use the murals to help them remember!
- 2. Reflect on this:



Today is the last session of this course. You've gotten lots of support to learn and make changes while we've been here together. Today we're going to prepare ourselves to sustain those changes after you leave. It can be challenging being targeted by 3000 adds a day, walking past a store when cool stuff is on sale, and seeing your friends getting new stereos, Ipods, sneakers, jeans, you name it, on a regular basis and NOT thinking you just have to have one too. How can we keep from getting sucked into the Stuff craze and help steward Creation when it gets hard?

3. Invite students to provide brief responses to the following questions:



What have you learned during the past five weeks that will help you change your thinking and habits of consumption?

How do you imagine your life changing as a result of this course? How has your faith grown during this course? How will it help you face these challenges?

4. Tell the group:



SESSION SIX: GOING FORTH!

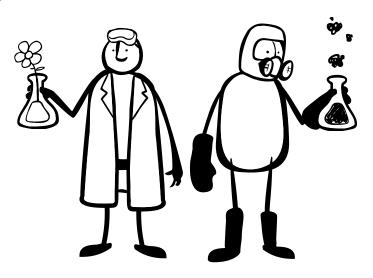
Emma Sleeth, a 15 year-old who wrote a book to help get her peers to become good Earth Stewards, has a little encouragement.

Introduce (10 min)

- 5. Refer to Session 6 Readings Sheet. Have students and willing adults read one paragraph each:
 - 1.1 When I was a child, one of my favorite books was The Little Engine that Could. The story is about a big train that breaks down while carrying a load of toys and other good things to children who live on the other side of a mountain. The broken-down engine asks several other passing trains for help, but they are either unable or unwilling. Finally, he sees a tiny blue engine, and asks that much smaller engine if he'll pull the shipment of good things to the children on the other side of the mountain. The little train looks up at that huge mountain, and isn't sure he's up to the task. But finally he decides to give it a go. And all the way up the hill, our little hero puffs, "I think I can. I think I can.



- 1.2 Like that little train, we may feel like there's a huge mountain standing between us and the greener world we long for. But Jesus had a few words for us about mountains. In Matthew 17:20, he says, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, "Move from here to there," and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."
- 1.3 With faith in God, nothing is impossible. Living a green life is within reach of every one of us. I think you can. God thinks you can.
- 1.4 When the children from the next "valley," from the next generation, see us, and the world we pass on to them, my hope is that they'll see a generation that was green. My hope is that they'll see a generation that took its choices seriously, that placed its faith in God, and found the strength to climb the highest mountain.
- 1.5 My hope is that they'll see a little generation that did.
- 6. Ask the group how they feel about going forth!



Engage (20 min)

Going Forth

Prep:

- Post the "Going Forth" poster
- Provide magazines, scissors, glue, non-toxic markers, and colored paper at a materials station
- Hand out notepaper and pens

Instructions:

- 1. Take a few minutes to help students imagine the world five years from now once they've done everything they could to become good earth stewards.
- 2. Tell them:



It's 20___, and you've done a great job as environmental leaders. Bravo! You have helped make some significant changes in your home, your congregation, and the larger world possible. You're 5 years older and, looking back at how it happened.

- 3. Tell them to write the answers to the following questions on a piece of notepaper:
 - What part(s) of Creation did you decide you especially wanted to help thrive in the future?



- What specific things did you do to make that possible? What parts of your own lifestyle did you permanently change? Where did you volunteer? What projects did you start or join?
- What support did you get that made it possible for you to succeed? Who or what helped you stick with it through thick and thin? How did you make sure you got that support?
- How did your faith support you in your efforts? How did your efforts affect your relationship with God?
- Write a short prayer in which you praise God for the beauty of creation and ask for help in sustaining it.
- 4. Have students go to the mural panel and in the center circle put words or image that depict the part of creation that they're committed to taking care of.
- 5. Have students put on the middle circle any words or images that express what they did on behalf of that part of Creation.
- 6. On the outer circle tell students to put the words and/or pictures that represent the support they got.
- 7. Finally, have students write their prayer in an open space somewhere on the mural.
- 8. Invite everyone to share what they put on the mural.

Share/Enact (8 min)

Prep:

- Post a piece of paper. Have large colored markers ready to capture brainstorm ideas.
- Hand out a the Going Forth Actions list and Going Forth Commitment sheet.

Instructions:

- 1. Let students know that there are unlimited ways that they can keep the momentum going as Earth Stewards. Have them brainstorm, popcorn-style, some of the things they can do.
- 2. Point out that the Action Sheet has a few ideas as well and have them review these with their parent(s)/guardian(s).
- 3. Hand out the Going Forth form and have them choose 3 actions they want to commit to doing. These can come from prior session action plans, the Going Forth Action list, or the brainstormed list. Whatever they're inspired to do, that they are going to commit to doing for a period of time that they specify.
- 4. Have the parent(s)/guardian(s) look over the list with their children and decide how they want to support them.

The form says:

			t of Creation or futur erve, here), I commit t	
1 2 3		(time). (time). (time).		
will get support will get support will get support	from my	buddy	 by	·

- 5. Once they've filled in the form, have them each stand up and read their commitment to the group to a resounding applause!
- 6. Then have them choose their final buddy or buddies (they can have as many as they want for this) who will commit to calling them in a month to see how they're doing. Give them time to exchange phone numbers and schedule the dates for their follow up calls.

Share/Enact

Presentation for the Congregation

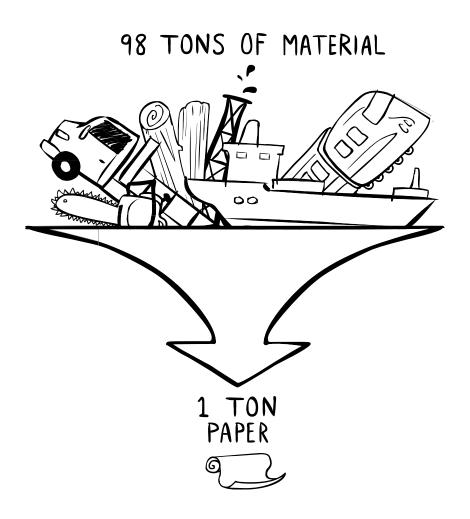
Invite students to share what they've learned with the congregation.

Possibilities are:

- Write a Psalm celebrating Creation's goodness that can be used during worship or printed in the congregation's newsletter or website
 Give a sermon or presentation on what they learned
 Present their murals and describe what it represents
- ☐ See if they have any other ideas
- ☐ Let them know that you will be following up with them.

Celebrate (5 min)

- 1. Declare the winners of the awards and present the award "certificates" and/or prizes.
- 2. Then call the name of each student and hand them a "certificate" of achievement.



Exit (3 min)

Closing Circle

- Have everyone stand close to each other in a circle. Invite them to put the hand with the string tied around the wrist in the center and put all hands on top of each other (photo opportunity) so they can see all the strings. Tell them they can use their strings as a reminder of their commitment to each other, to God, and to becoming stewards of Creation after the course ends. May it support them in being steadfast and strong on the long journey ahead, and remind them of the fun they had together.
- Go around the circle and invite everyone to share briefly what the class has meant to them. You go last and include some encouraging comments about the possibility of them making real change in the world!

Blessing



God, you've given us the joy and privilege of spending six weeks together, learning about the beauty of your earth and what we can do to protect it. Now, send us forth to be leaders for your world that we may enjoy it throughout our lives and pass it on healthy and strong to our children. We ask this in Jesus' name, AMEN.

Before Leaving

• Hand out the Resource List and make sure they have GreenFaith and Story of Stuff website where resources are posted.

After the Session

- Make arrangements with the congregation to have the students present the murals and their experience.
- Be prepared with ideas for how the congregation can take action together by going to GreenFaith's website.

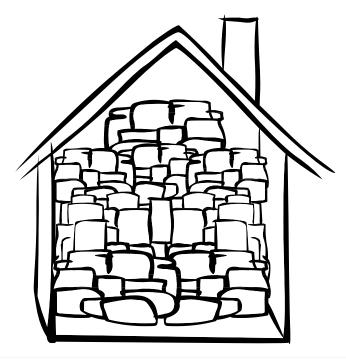
WE WANNA KNOW...

Congratulations on completing Session 6! How did it go? How much time did the exercises actually take? What worked? What didn't? What do you think would work better?

Let us know at: www.storyofstuff.org/teach.php

Session 6: Readings

- 1.1 When I was a child, one of my favorite books was The Little Engine that Could. The story is about a big train that breaks down while carrying a load of toys and other good things to children who live on the other side of a mountain. The brokendown engine asks several other passing trains for help, but they are either unable or unwilling. Finally, he sees a tiny blue engine, and asks that much smaller engine if he'll pull the shipment of good things to the children on the other side of the mountain. The little train looks up at that huge mountain, and isn't sure he's up to the task. But finally he decides to give it a go. And all the way up the hill, our little hero puffs, "I think I can, I think I can. I think I can."
- 1.2 Like that little train, we may feel like there's a huge mountain standing between us and the greener world we long for. But Jesus had a few words for us about mountains. In Matthew 17:20, he says, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, "Move from here to there," and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.
- 1.3 With faith in God, nothing is impossible. Living a green life is within reach of every one of us. I think you can. God thinks you can.
- 1.4 When the children from the next "valley," the next generation, see us, and the world we pass on to them, my hope is that they'll see a generation that was green. My hope is that they'll see a generation that took its choices seriously, that placed its faith in God, and found the strength to climb the highest mountain.
- 1.5 My hope is that they'll see a little generation that did.





Let There Be...Stuff? Course Review Cheat Sheet

Session 1 - Caring for Creation

Themes:

- Awe and wonder at God's Creation.
- Our role and responsibility as stewards of Creation.

Activities:

- Web of Life Icebreaker
- Creation slide show or outdoor Genesis reading
- Promises and Promise strings
- Mural Caring for Creation

Session 2 - The Story of Stuff

Themes:

- Facing difficult truths about our world
- The real cost of our stuff on people and the planet.
- We're trashing the planet, poisoning ourselves, and not even having fun

Activities:

- The Story of Stuff Film
- Film discussion

Session 3 - An Unfortunate Creation Story

Themes:

- Learning the secret life of clothing, jewelry, electronics, and cosmetics.
- The externalized costs of extraction and production
- Destruction of ecosystems, poisoning the workers, and putting toxins in the environment and into our stuff.
- Taking our role as Earth Stewards seriously

Activities:

• The True Cost activity

Session 4 - Don't Buy It!

Themes:

- Understanding the way media manipulates us to keep buying Stuff
- Planned obsolescence Designed for the dump
- Perceived obsolescence needing the latest Stuff in order to be happy
- The true source of happiness comes from God and relationships with others

Activities:

- Adbusters
- Looking at Ads and seeing how they manipulate us
- Making up skits about commercials

Session 5 - Waste Not!

Themes

- Our toxic waste streams
- The impact on vulnerable populations
- The ethical issues of wasting things

Activities:

- Waste quiz
- Chris Jordan and Asian children pictures
- Garbage audit

GOING FORTH ACTION LIST

Here are a few ideas for projects you can carry over from *Let There Be Stuff...?* into your church as you continue to engage your community to live in caring relationship with God and Creation:

Swap It! Organize a Church-wide Stuff Swap

Reduce waste, share more, and build community all at once! All you have to do is pick a weekend date and get started planning and publicizing.

- Don't know quite where to being? Check out Oxfam's "Swap It" planning guide and just adapt it slightly to best fit your needs.
- Check out: http://www.oxfam.org.uk/get_involved/campaign/activists/swapit_partybag.html

A Night at the Movies: Organize a church-wide Environmental Film Festival Night

Movies are a great way to spread the word and get people excited about taking action to protect creation. There are so many great films about these issues; for starters you could watch share *The Story of Stuff* with your entire church.

- Want more ideas? Check out this list of green films pulled together by Grist: http://www.grist.org/article/movies/
- Need some help planning the screening? Check out the host guide at *The Story of Stuff* here: http://www.storyofstuff.org/screening.php

Waste Not, Want Not: Create and Implement a Plan to reduce waste at your house of worship.

Want to waste less? Changing the way your congregation uses and throws away stuff can have a huge impact.

• Check out GreenFaith's website for a few ideas here: http://www.greenfaith.org/stewardship/waste.html

Be an E-Steward: Organize an E-Waste Collection at Your Church

Sponsor a e-waste drive at your church and get those computers and cell phones out of peoples closets and drawers. You can help increase recycling and make sure its being dealt with responsibly by coordinating a drop off with a local E-Steward certified recycler.

 To find one in your area check out the E-Steward site: http://www.e-stewards.org/

Volunteer for the Planet

Choose an organization that inspires you and make a commitment to give of your time. There are so many organizations out there doing great work. Don't know where to start?

• Check out WiserEarth.org for a great compendium of organizations making a difference: http://www.wiserearth.org/

GOING FORTH FORM

SESSION SIX: BOING FORTH

Going Forth Form			
For the sake of or whatever inspires you to	(put in the part of Creation or future generations serve, here), I commit to:		
1 for _	(time).		
2 for _	(time).		
3for _			
	by uddyby arents by		
Good 23 pp	Justice Yes We Conl Si Se Puedel Marketing Mar		

Going Forth Form

For the sake of	_(put in	the par	t of Creatio	n or future	generations
or whatever inspires you to serve,	here), I	l comm	it to:		

1.	for	(time,)
_			

I will get support from God by_____.

I will get support from my buddy _____by _____by

I will get support from my parents by_____



^{2.} ______ for _____ (time).
3. _____ for _____ (time).

RESOURCES

There are so many inspiring organizations and brilliant people doing great work on these issues.

We've gone ahead and listed a few resources below that might be particularly useful and you can always check out www.storyofstuff.org and www.greenfaith.org for more information and exciting ways to get involved.

ONLINE

Biomimicry Institute

 An incredible network of scientists looking to learn from nature to solve today's problems: www.biomimicryinstitute.org

Campaign for Safe Cosmetics

 Fighting to get toxics out of our personal care products, because looking good shouldn't harm you or the planet: www.safecosmetics.org

Electronics TakeBake Coalition

 Making our electronics safer and longer lasting with less impact on workers at both the Production and Disposal stage: www.computertakeback.com

Brower Youth Awards

 A compilation of incredible and inspiring youth making a real difference: www.broweryouthawards.org

Happy Planet Index

Rethinking our economy with ecology in mind: www.happyplanetindex.org

GoodGuide

Helping us make better buying decisions: www.goodguide.com

WiserEarth.org

• An Incredible compilation of organizations around the globe for sustainability and justice: www.wiserearth.org

IN PRINT

- The Story of Stuff Annie Leonard
- **Deep Economy** Bill McKibben
- The Overspent American: Why We Want What We Don't Need- Juliet Schor
- Confessions of an Eco-Sinner: Tracking Down the Sources of My Stuff -Fred Pearce
- Bridge at the End of the World James Gustave Speth