

MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICES GAME INSTRUCTIONS

Comparing the Stability Household Budget to the Household Survival Budget

- 1 Make a copy of the “game sheet” for everyone at the meeting. If you want people to work in teams, make a copy for each team.
- 2 Provide each person/team with 45 candies (Smarties work well because there are 15 in each roll).
- 3 Tell each person or team that the candies are symbolic of their “budget” and not to eat them until the end of the game.
- 4 Explain that for the purposes of the game, each person or team is to pretend they are married and have two children (a toddler and an infant).
- 5 Both adults in the household are working full time. One making \$60,000 a year and the other making \$70,000 a year.
- 6 The candies represents this income as a monthly budget. It is enough to afford the stability household budget. So place all the candies in the last column.
- 7 Now an unexpected event occurs. The spouse making \$70,000 loses that job and finds a new one but only making \$40,000 a year. This is the equivalent of an 8 candy loss in the monthly budget. Decide how you will adjust your expenses by moving the candies accordingly.
OR
Now an unexpected event occurs. The spouse making \$70,000 loses that job and must go on unemployment which pays about \$26,000 a year. This is the equivalent of a 14 candy loss in the monthly budget. Decide how you will adjust your expenses by moving the candies accordingly.
- 8 Then there is another change, your mother has a stroke and needs 24 hour a day care. Her social security and insurance only cover half the expenses. Reduce your candies by another 4 per month to cover these expenses.

Notes:

Have players turn the game over to show the Stability vs. Survival vs. Poverty budgets (part of the ALICE report).

Explain that they started at the Stability budget, and this game illustrates how difficult it is to make choices when changes happen at that level.

Then talk about how 28% (895,879 households) in our area are operating on the Survival budget. Have players discuss how they would survive if these same two occurrences happened to them.



MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICES GAME INSTRUCTIONS

Comparing the Household Survival Budget to the Poverty Budget

- 1 Make a copy of the “game sheet” for everyone at the meeting. If you want people to work in teams, make a copy for each team.
- 2 Provide each person/team with 26 candies (Smarties have 15 in each roll).
- 3 Tell each person or team that the candies are symbolic of their “budget” and not to eat them until the end of the game.
- 4 Explain that for the purposes of the game, each person or team is to pretend they are married and have two children (a toddler and an infant).
- 5 Both adults in the household are working full time. One making \$30,000 a year and the other making \$45,000 a year.
- 6 The 25 candies represents this income as a monthly budget. It is enough to afford the household survival budget. So place all the candies in the middle column.
- 7 Now an unexpected event occurs. The spouse making \$45,000 loses that job and must go on unemployment which pays about \$22,000 a year. This is the equivalent of a 5 candy loss in the monthly budget. Decide how you will adjust your expenses by moving the candies accordingly.
- 8 Then there is another change, your mother has a stroke and needs 24 hour a day care. Her social security and insurance only cover half the expenses. Reduce your candies by another 4 per month to cover these expenses.

Notes:

Have players turn the game over to show the Stability vs. Survival vs. Poverty budgets (part of the ALICE report).

Explain that they started at the Survival budget, and this game illustrates how difficult it is to make choices when changes happen at that level.

Then talk about how 28% (895,879 households) in our area are operating on the Survival budget. Have players discuss how they would survive if these same two occurrences happened to them.

