

CRUNCH THE NUMBERS

Activity Objective:

Girls create a personal spending log.

Toward Leadership Outcomes:

Through this activity, girls will:

- ✓ Gain practical life skills—Girls think about their financial needs and how they can meet them. They make a budget and set savings goals. **(Discover)**

Experience Overview:

5 minutes Introduction (Talking Points)

40 minutes Crunch the Numbers (Personal Spending Log)

10 minutes Reflection/Discussion

Supplies Needed:

- ✓ Pens or pencils (enough for each girl)

Prepare Ahead:

- ✓ Make copies of the “Crunch the Numbers” chart.
- ✓ Read over the entire activity before meeting with girls.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

» Introduction (Talking Points) (5 minutes)

- ✓ Say something like this: “Have you ever considered how much it costs to run your life? Thinking about expenses, or all the little things that add up in our lives, not only gives us a chance to put our math skills to use in a way that is relevant, but also helps us prepare for a realistic and positive future. For example, many of you will soon be making budgets

FINANCIAL FLAIR ACTIVITY 1

DISCOVER:

» Gain practical life skills

of your own—to balance the costs of being a high school student with money you earn from a job. Plus, it is kind of interesting to see how much it costs to maintain your daily life.”

» Crunch the Numbers (40 minutes)

- ✓ Distribute pens or pencils.
- ✓ Distribute copies of the “Crunch the Numbers” chart.
- ✓ Say something like this: “In order to figure out the total of how much it costs to maintain your daily life, it is easiest to break the costs down into increments.” (Ask for definition of increments: parts) “This chart will help you track your costs for a one-week increment. Think about not just what you spend of your own money, but all the costs that add up in one week. For example, how much do you think it costs to feed you? Think about the cost of each meal and multiply it by the days of the week. Or, how much do you think the outfit you are wearing costs? And how about at night? Are you listening to a CD that was bought just for you? Are you going to the movies? Or maybe going out to get a bite to eat or hang out with friends? Since not every girl is the same, some of the costs on the chart may not apply to you. For now, do not worry about the bottom two columns. Just focus on writing your costs down.”
- ✓ **As a group, lead girls through the following steps:**
 - » Add costs for weekly total
 - » Multiply total by four for monthly costs
 - » Multiply total by 52 for yearly costs
- ✓ **Ask girls:** “Would we say our weekly costs in this chart are an exact number or an average? What is an average? How do you figure out an average?” (Average: Add total and divide by the number of elements.)

» Reflection/Discussion (10 minutes)

- ✓ **Ask girls:**
“Think about the near future and how your costs may change. For example, what costs might be different for you in high school?”
- ✓ “What is a budget? (Budget: balance of expenses (‘money going out’) and income (‘money coming in’) Why do you think it is important to do a budget? Do you think it is hard or easy to stick to a budget? Why? What kinds of things might get in your way of sticking to a budget?”
- ✓ “Have you ever wanted something badly but your parents or guardians would not give you the money? How is this situation best handled? Can you do anything to solve it?”

*** Be sure to collect each girl’s “Crunch the Numbers” chart and keep for use in *Financial Flair Activity 2*.

Encourage girls to discuss budgeting with their families. Guide girls by sharing the following questions with them to use as conversation starters:

- ✓ “Do we have a family budget?”
- ✓ “What items are included in the family budget?”
- ✓ “How does having a budget help our lives?”
- ✓ “What kinds of things get in the way of sticking to the budget?”
- ✓ “How can I help the family budget improve?”
- ✓ “How did you learn to budget?”
- ✓ “In what areas do we overspend? What can we do about it?”