



SAY:

"This week we are going to be learning about Sweet Sleep – an organization with a mission of demonstrating God's love and hope in Christ to the world's orphaned and vulnerable children, improving their quality of life. There are many ways Sweet Sleep helps children and families. They provide beds for physical rest, Bibles for spiritual rest and the rest that

comes from financial independence. In everything Sweet Sleep does, they seek to provide *True Rest*.

Jesus promises to give rest to the weary and God can use us to help provide rest for those in need."

Read the following:

MATTHEW 11:28

"Come to me all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

SAY:

"For years, Sweet Sleep worked primarily in orphanages and villages providing beds and Bibles to orphaned and abandoned children – important work that continues to this day. But the question that stayed on the hearts and minds of Sweet Sleep staff and volunteers was this – what if families didn't have to abandon their children because they couldn't afford to care for them? Digging into that question and looking into the situations that single mothers, widows, and grandmothers were facing led to the creation of the Sweet Sleep's CO•OP program.

A CO•OP supports families providing for vulnerable children by providing Christ-centered business training, counseling and discipleship, startup money for a group business and seed money for savings and loan groups. This help empower women caring for children to generate sustainable income that helps them afford food, clothing, medical care, and

school fees for their families. So far, Sweet Sleep has created over 120 CO•OPs and financed over 1800 businesses. These include raising and selling pigs, growing vegetables, tailoring clothing, candle making and more!

Most of Sweet Sleep's CO•OPs involve raising animals and growing vegetables. With that in mind, Sweet Sleep has started building farms where four or five CO•OPs can work together. This is not only great for their small businesses, but it creates space and opportunity for women to encourage each other and grow in their relationships with God together through worship, Bible study and prayer.

Let's learn more about how a CO•OP works!"

Play Video: Sweet Sleep CO•OP – Justine

Share your goal with your group. Help purchase farmland for \$1,000, help provide a water tank or cistern for \$500, help provide a shelter or a fence for \$200, plant a garden for \$50 or your group can see how many \$20 chicks or \$100 pigs they can provide during your project! However you choose to help, you'll be contributing to real-life change for these women and children. Your church can even go on a trip to help with the farm you're funding and share God's love with those working with and impacted by the farm! Whatever your group can raise will help free people from poverty and support those caring for vulnerable children.

COLLECT OFFERING

PRAY

Ask God to help each of us to understand the importance of helping meet the needs of caregivers and vulnerable children.





SAY:

“James 1:27 says this: “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress.” Not only are orphans kids who have lost one or both parents, but they are also kids whose parents or caretakers simply cannot provide for them. This could be food, a home, or fees to go to school. There are about 140 million orphans in the world today and 80-90 percent of those have living parents. This means the majority of the world’s orphans are social or economic orphans. Poverty forces parents to make difficult decisions like abandoning their children.

Often, in places like Uganda where Sweet Sleep works, when parents don’t see a way out of poverty, neighbors, aunts, or grandmothers will often take

in and care for vulnerable children in their villages – even if they don’t have enough money to feed themselves. But Psalm 68:6 says: “God places the lonely in families.” And He does that in many ways. Helping provide for these caregivers so they can provide food and for the needs of these children is an important part we can play in God’s plan for them!

Most families in Uganda make less than 1 dollar a day. Let’s see what that actually looks like. Check out this video.”

Play “A Dollar A Day” Video

The How Many Beans? activity below is also in our CO•OP COLLAB curriculum. If you have already done CO•OP COLLAB, you can choose to use this activity again or sign up for an account and play FREERICE with your kids here. For the FreeRice activity, say: “Let’s see how many grains of rice we can provide answering these questions! With every correct answer, 10 grains of actual rice will be donated to people in need around the world. If we get 100 grains we’ll fill a bowl!” Select the category “Zero Hunger” to play.

ACTIVITY: HOW MANY BEANS?

Supplies:

- Plastic, see-through cups, one for each child
- A bag of beans – about 1500 beans per 25 kids
- 3 index cards per child – these will be made into 3 “decks”
- A bowl big enough to hold a lot of beans

Prepare:

1. Fill cups with beans. Every student gets one cup. If you have 25 students, fill...
 - 5 cups with 100 beans
 - 5 cups with 80 beans
 - 5 cups with 60 beans
 - 5 cups with 40 beans
 - 5 cups with 20 beans

If you have more or less than 25 students, aim for a similar ratio. There's no exact number here, you just want to make sure you have a wide variety. This can also be done in smaller groups – it would be difficult for example to do this with 300 kids in a large group room.

2. On the 3x5 cards, make up 3 “decks”:

For a group of 25 students, on one deck, write

“100 Beans” on 5 cards

“80 Beans” on 5 cards

“60 Beans” on 5 cards

“40 Beans” on 5 cards

“20 Beans” on 5 cards

Make another deck of 3x5 cards; these cards read

“10 Beans” on 5 cards

“5 Beans” on 5 cards

“0 Beans” on 5 cards

“-5 Beans” on 5 cards

“-10 Beans” on 5 cards

The third deck of cards read

“10 Beans” on 5 cards

“5 Beans” on 5 Cards

“0 Beans” on 2 cards

“-5 Beans” on 5 Cards

“Wipeout” on 3 cards

Have the children sit in a circle. Ask them to give examples of talents. They may say, “singing,” “basketball,” “teaching,” “being nice,” “studying,” etc. Help them understand that as you get older, you get paid for your talent or what you do for a living.

Tell them God gives everyone a talent, but some talents will gain a person more income than others. Again, ask the kids for examples. You could tell them someone could have a talent for teaching, but if you can shoot a basketball as well as LeBron James you'll make much more money.

Help them understand that in God's eyes all talents are valuable; how society rewards or compensates a talent is a different story.

You are now ready to hand out the first set of cards – the deck that has the range of 20 to 100 beans listed on them.

Tell them each card represents how much what they do for a living is rewarded in society.

Hand out the cards and the appropriate cup of beans to each student to match their card. This is done so students can start to actually see who has more beans than others. Let them know that this is not representing them or what they actually will earn with their talents, just a way to show us how some people make a lot with what they do and some people only make a little.

Next, engage them in a conversation about choices people make that can help put them in a place to make more money to provide for themselves or their families. Kids may say things like, “choosing to go college or trade school,” etc.



“Sometimes we make decisions that help us be in a better place to provide for ourselves and others and sometimes our decisions negatively affect that ability.”

Take the next set of cards. Shuffle and fan them out for students to pick from, without looking. They pick this card to symbolize it is something they chose.

The cards with ten or five beans on them represent that this person made choices that increased their abilities and potential to provide more for their family. Negative bean cards represent choices that diminished their opportunities. Zero means they did nothing to increase or decrease their opportunities.

Students then add or subtract beans in the cup accordingly from the bowl of beans.

The last set of cards represents "things that happened to you through no fault of your own." Again, ask the kids for examples. They may say things like "a car accident that leaves you disabled," "a death of a parent," etc. Feel free to give your own examples.

66 SAY:

"Sometimes people are already at a disadvantage because of their family situation they grew up in, where the live, war in their country – many things can be out of someone's control leading to poverty."

Take the last set of cards and hand them out to the students. Handing the cards to them symbolizes a choice they did not have. The "wipeout" cards represent something that was so devastating that it virtually wipes you out financially. You could ask students for examples like "storms," "fires," etc.

Quickly add or subtract beans from kids' cups. Then have each child call out his or her total, so everyone can hear the disparity. You should have some students with as many as 120 beans, and some with as few as 10 and everything in between.

66 SAY:

"Now imagine you are paying bills. Water and heat/electricity is 15 beans a month. Basic healthcare is 10 beans. Feeding your family for a month is 20 beans. School fees are 10 beans per kid you have at home. You can see that some around you can pay all of these things with no problem, but many can't – they'd run out of beans.

Many women in countries like Uganda make very little and are unable to provide what is needed for children they care for. Through no fault of their own, their situations leave them at a disadvantage. What we are doing this week to help these women start a sustainable farming business not only will help them buy actual beans to feed themselves and their families but help them meet other needs, too."

COLLECT OFFERING

PRAY

Ask God to continue to provide for more CO•OPs to help more women and children – through us, through other churches around the country, etc.





SAY:

"Yesterday we talked about how little some people are able to make in countries like Uganda – not to mention the type of hard labor they often do for

very little money. Let's see how those in poverty have to make difficult choices to survive and provide for themselves and those they care for."

POWER POINT ACTIVITY: TOUGH CHOICES

SAY:

"Making difficult decisions just to eat or provide food for themselves or the children they care for is stressful and at times heart-breaking for women Sweet Sleep staff and volunteers meet in Uganda.

The funds we are helping provide for CO•OPs joining together on a farm help relieve stress and allow for crucial needs to be met. What we are doing this week will make a huge difference!"

COLLECT OFFERING

PRAYER ACTIVITY: CHIRPING CHICK

Supply Needed: Chirping Chick available online [here](#). Tips: You may want to order more than one. Also, be sure just to touch the contact points not push the pins in.

Ask children to gather in a circle and hold hands. Stand between two children in the circle. Hold the chirping chick without touching the 2 contact points on the bottom. Remind the group of your offering goals and explain to the children that it will take all of us coming together to help fund this farm helping as many women and children as we can! Guide one child to touch the contact point on the chick and the other kid in the circle to touch the opposite one. The

bird will chirp. You may want to do this a few times – they'll be amazed. If you have time, you could have the students who connected the chirping chick grab each other's hands, and you move to another spot in the circle to give other kids a chance to connect the chirping chick. After this, while their hands are still clasped (or put hands to their sides if you want) lead the children in prayer asking God to bless your offering.



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SAY:

"It takes commitment, hard work and someone to care and come alongside a person to help them out of poverty. Many things can cause someone to not be able to provide for themselves or their family – abandonment, lack of available jobs, lack of skills needed, lack of child care... but as we can see

through CO•OPs, with a little guidance and the funds to get started, mamas, aunties and grannies are able to start and sustain businesses that provide for themselves and those they care for."

Read Proverbs 31:25:

PROVERBS 31:25

"She is clothed with strength and dignity, and she laughs without fear of the future."

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SAY:

"Helping women provide for their families helps them find strength and dignity. Not only can these women in CO•OPs find strength and peace in God through the CO•OP program, but they can have peace knowing that their needs are being met through their work.

Let's hear Doreen's story and learn about her CO•OP."

Show Video: "Doreen's Story"

The activity below is also featured in the CO•OP COLLAB Curriculum. If you have already sent kids home with seeds like this, consider finding a flower bed or place on your church campus to plant wildflowers or small plants to watch them grow each week you come to church!

ACTIVITY: IT STARTS WITH A SEED

Supplies:

Plastic Cups
Dirt
Seeds



“As a reminder of those CO•OPs like Doreen’s growing and selling vegetables, let’s plant a seed and you can watch it grow at home! Isn’t it amazing to think that the money we raise this week will help seeds

sprout up around the world? Our offering this week also works like a seed. The money we give will help a new business grow providing for women and those they care for!”

Allow kids time to plant their seeds, give them instructions on care for the seeds when they go home, and help them pick them up before they head home for the day.

COLLECT THE OFFERING

PRAY

Pray that God will bring to mind these strong, brave women in CO•OPs as we watch our seeds grow at home. Thank Him for allowing us to be a part of His plan of provision for these women.





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SAY:

"We have had a great week together! And it's been really eye-opening to learn about the needs of women caring for orphaned and vulnerable children and how we can help Fund-A-Farm!"

If parents are there and haven't been the rest of the week, fill them in on what Sweet Sleep does; mentioning that you're sure their sons and daughters have filled them in! Ask them to consider joining their children in giving sacrificially to help provide a farm for these single mothers, aunts and grannies to provide for the children in their care.

66
SAY:

"Today is the last day we'll be collecting our missions offering. Let's watch this video and see what the money we've given so far and the money we'll give today/tonight will do for orphans in Uganda."
Show the "Thank You" video.

COLLECT THE OFFERING

PRAY

asking God to help each of us continue looking for ways to help those in poverty. Ask God to bless your offering and bless the women and children who will benefit from the farm we helped fund!