The Spending Game for Youth

Purpose
Spending money means making choices. There is never enough money for all the things we’d like. This game will help you decide what is more important to you.

How to Play
Round #1:
Today, each of you has a “20 bean” allowance. Go through all the choices in “The Spending Game.” Make one choice in each area and fill the box or boxes with a bean or beans. Instead of beans, you can use a pencil to mark up to 20 boxes.

Example
You choose to spend part of your allowance on snacks and drinks. You usually buy candy, gum or a soft drink from convenience stores or vending machines. Under the snack category, you would put beans or marks in the boxes by this choice.

Snacks and Drinks
a. Fix snacks at home
b. Convenience stores, vending machine
c. Fast food restaurant

Discussion Questions
Compare your spending choices to those of other players. What did you spend your money on? How do your values, beliefs, goals and past experiences affect spending choices? What did you learn about yourself from this activity?

Round #2:
Your allowance has now been cut to 12 beans. Decide what you are willing to give up or change in order to cut the eight beans. If you are using marks, complete 12 boxes with “X”.

Recreation
a. Spend time with friends at home or in a park
b. In-line skate, bowl, swim, fish
c. Rent movie or video game from store or download
d. Attend movie at theater with snack
e. Buy used video game
f. Buy new video game

Snacks and Drinks
a. Fix snacks at home
b. Convenience stores, vending machine
c. Fast food

Savings
a. Small change in a piggy bank
b. Regular deposits in a savings account
c. Regular purchase of savings bond

Sports Equipment
a. Borrow
b. Buy used
c. Buy new

Music
a. Listen to radio or borrow from library
b. Buy used at garage sales or resale store
c. Buy new at specialty store or buy online
Clothing

a. Mix and match current clothes. Alter, adorn or mend.
b. Shop at garage sales or resale store
c. Shop at discount store
d. Shop at department store
e. Shop at specialty store for exclusive brands

Hobbies, Collecting, Books and Games

a. Borrow or trade, use supplies on hand
b. Buy used or at a discount store
c. Buy new at a specialty store

gifts

Phone

a. Use phone at home
b. Buy basic wireless phone and basic plan with limited minutes
c. Buy latest wireless phone with unlimited minutes and texting

More Choices

a. Make your own or give gifts of your time and skill
b. Cards and small gifts on special occasions
c. Expensive gifts for everybody

You may select more than one.
a. Magazine subscription
b. Dance, fitness or music lessons
c. Tickets to concert or sports event
The Spending Game for Youth was adapted for Arkansas by Laura Connerly from The Allowance Game, Iowa State University Extension. Connerly is instructor - family resource management, University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service, Little Rock.