

WHAT, ME WORRY?

1. Put an **X** next to the things that worry you.

What others think of me
 What grades I get
 How I look
 Who to date
 What job I'll have someday
 How popular I am
 When there'll be another war
 When I'll die
 When my family will have another fight
 How long my parents will stay together
 What I'll do beyond high school
 What to do about my problems with the police

When I'll be abused again
 When my parents will get help with their addiction
 How I'm doing in my walk with Christ
 How my parents will pay the bills this month
 What my drug or alcohol problem is doing to my life
 What the world will be like when I'm older
 Who I'll marry
 Who my friends are

2. Which answer is **true** for you?

The more I worry about something—

- ☐ the worse things get.
- ☐ the better things get.
- ☐ I realize it doesn't change a thing.
- ☐ the less it affects me.
- ☐ it gets worse in my mind.

3. How can someone get rid of worry?

4. On the list in question 1, write an **O** next to those items that are **out of your control**. Then write **C** next to the ones that you **can control**.

5. Check out one of these passages, and rewrite in your own words.

Romans 8:28

Philippians 4:6-7

1 Peter 5:7



WHAT, ME WORRY? [worry]

THIS WEEK

Teenagers have way too much to worry about—their looks, relationships, grades, their future, and more. Today's teenager deals with more stress and tension than ever before. This TalkSheet will help your group talk about their worries and insecurities and how their faith can help them through.

OPEN

Start with a worry-version of the game Pictionary. Have your kids write down some random, funny worries that they deal with or think about. Some possibilities include—having body odor, getting a pimple on the nose, flunking a math test, not knowing how to kiss, not knowing your fly is open, not being able to get to sleep, going to the dentist, or passing gas. Collect them and have volunteers from each team take turns drawing these worries. The rest of the group tries to guess what kind of worry is being drawn and the team with the most points wins.

THE DISCUSSION, BY NUMBERS

1. Some of your kids maybe won't want to open up right away, so start them off by talking about some of the things that worried you as a teenager. Use a whiteboard or poster board to write down worries and insecurities that they face at school, home, church, work, etc.
2. Point out that worrying really doesn't help make a situation better. But sometimes worry is okay—it can motivate them to do things that are good. For example, a student who worries about gaining weight starts a workout program. What do your kids think?
3. Brainstorm some different solutions to worrying. List them on a whiteboard for everyone to see. Define the difference between worry—that doesn't change things—and concern—that motivates change. Communicate that worry is a waste of emotional energy that can be better spend solving a problem or finding a solution.
4. Which of these are out of their control? Which ones aren't worth worrying about? How easy is it to give God control over these situations? What steps can they take to make changes or handle worry?
5. After reading these verses, talk about what God thinks about worrying. Explain that worrying is actually taking situations into our own hands and trying to control our lives. Instead of worrying, encourage your kids to give the situations over to God and ask for his peace and guidance.

THE CLOSE

The English word worry comes from a German word, *wurgen*, meaning "to choke." Worry, in a sense, is mental agony and can weaken the soul.

It's normal and healthy to have worries, but it can be destructive and self-defeating. It's useless to worry about things that they can't control.

Help your kids realize Christians don't have to worry about the past or the future—both are in God's hands. Jesus says repeatedly in Matthew 6:25-34 that they have nothing to worry about. Whether they know it or not, God is taking care of us.

Brainstorm ways that your youth can deal with their worries. Encourage them to talk about their worries with someone else—a friend, a parent, and another respected adult—someone who is willing to listen. Let them know you are available to listen and help.

MORE

- What happens when people get wrapped up in worry? Have your kids list and talk about what worry does to us physically and the outcomes of worry. Address issues like physical stress, anxiety, depression, and what happens when people can't deal with their worries—like suicide and abusing alcohol or drugs. Communicate that worry is more than just a spiritual battle—it's a mental battle, too. What can they do to help themselves deal with their worries?
- Have your youth find examples of things that people their age worry about. They can find examples all over—in teenage magazines, on the Internet, radio, song lyrics, and more. Help them understand that everyone has worries—even famous athletes and celebrities.
- Time for a little Q & A! Ask your group member to write down (anonymously) thing that they worry about. Pick them out and read them aloud. What advice or encouragement do they have for each other? What suggestions to you or other adults have? Where can they go to get more information?