

## STAND-ALONE EVENT

Reality Store may also be implemented as a Stand-Alone Event, although it is strongly recommended that it is implemented as a part of the Money Matters program. In this model, Clubs and Youth Centers host Reality Store without running Money Matters. You may want to partner with other Clubs or community agencies. A Stand-Alone Reality Store event can be a way to boost teen recruitment or parent/caregiver involvement, or to interest Club teens in participating in additional financial literacy programming.

### Teen Preparation and Reflection Sessions

There are two additional teen planning and reflection sessions that you will find on pages 39-54 in the Preparing Teens section that can be used to help teens plan and reflect on their experience. The “Reality Store Planning” Session should be implemented right before your Reality Store event and will help teens prepare for the event by choosing their careers and salaries. The “Reality Store Revisited” Session should be implemented right after the event (before teens leave) in order to aid them in reflecting on their Reality Store experience and using that knowledge in their own lives.

### Staffing Needs

The ideal number of teens for a stand-alone event is approximately 50 teens. It is recommended to have approximately 20-36 volunteers, which is around 1-2 volunteers per station. More volunteers will be needed than the Standard Version since there may be more teens participating. It is also recommended that you add additional Club Professionals to help with the logistics. Gameplay will take approximately 2.5 hours (this includes the teen preparation and reflection sessions). Additional time will be needed for set-up, getting volunteers oriented when they arrive, and food if you provide it.

### Mini Version

In this model, two or more stations are combined into one for a smaller footprint that can be facilitated with fewer staff or volunteers. Use this model to extend the program if you’re running a Stand-Alone Event with a small group of teens or have less volunteers. You can combine some of the stations and have one Station Manager manage 2-3 stations. You would need approximately 10-20 volunteers and gameplay will take approximately 2 hours (this includes the teen preparation and reflection sessions). Below are a list of recommended stations to combine:

- Furniture and Electronics, Groceries
- Childcare, Transportation
- Life’s Unexpected, Legal
- Clothing, Grooming
- Pet and Veterinarian, Charitable Donations, Entertainment and Travel

It is not recommended that you combine the following stations since these are typically high traffic Stations and will need at least one dedicated volunteer (two is optimal):

- Careers and Salaries
- Banking and Investing
- Housing
- Utilities
- Financial Counseling

Also, since teens select their careers and salaries at the beginning of the game, the traffic at this station will decrease as the game progresses. You could consider using that volunteer for stations at end of the game, such as Teen Evaluation if you need more volunteers.

## Station Descriptions

Most of the stations included in Reality Store feature items that adults need for basic living. Teens visit each of the following stations and, after making a purchase, deduct the monthly cost of the item from their Budget Tracking Form. A few of the stations are not needed for basic living and have optional purchases. All stations are mandatory for teens to visit even if they don't make a purchase in order for them to be exposed to a variety of wants and needs to purchase, and better stimulate "real life" where spending is made for both wants and needs.

If you do not have enough volunteers or space to use all of the included stations, you may eliminate the ones marked "optional purchase". These stations are:

- Grooming
- Pet and Veterinarian (Note: if you do not use this station remove the "Life's Unexpected" cards #20 and #25 requiring teens to visit this station).
- Charitable Contributions
- Entertainment and Travel

You must use all of the stations marked "Mandatory Purchase" (requires teens to make a purchase) or "Mandatory for Gameplay" (purchase not required, but needed for the implementation of the event) if you chose to reduce the amount of stations that you use.

## Stations

### Description of the symbols:

- 💰 This requires a mandatory purchase by teens.
- ✓ This station is mandatory for the game.

### Careers and Salaries (Mandatory Purchase; Start Here) 💰 ✓

At this station, teens receive information on the yearly salary, monthly salary, total tax, and net pay (after-tax amount) for their occupation and their spouses. They record this information on their Personal Profile Form, and then make a "deposit" on their Budget Tracking Form for the amount of one month's income.

### Banking and Investing (Mandatory Purchase) 💰 ✓

At this station, teens learn about short and long-term saving strategies by depositing 10% of their net income into a short-term savings account. Additionally, there is an optional deposit where teens can choose to deposit another 10% of their net income into an investment portfolio that represents long-term savings. The Station Manager helps teens understand that investments are an important part of their financial plan, essential for the education of their children, for financial security throughout their lives, and

for retirement. They also learn that investments have an element of risk and are considered long-term savings that should not be used to meet day-to-day expenses. Therefore teens won't be able to access their investment deposit during gameplay. At the end of the game when teens visit the last station (Teen Evaluation Station) they can see how much their money would grow over time (20 years) if they chose to invest 10% of their income every month.

If teens have a working spouse, they have the choice to deposit the spouse's salary as well. This teaches them not to become dependent on a second salary in case it is not always available. Teens also make a monthly student loan payment based on the level of education needed for their occupation. They may return to this station at any time if they need to add a spouse's income to their total budget, transfer money from a savings to a checking account (or vice versa), record a raise in salary, or get a loan. Teens must visit this station after they visit the Careers and Salaries Station.

### **Housing (Mandatory Purchase) \$ ✓**

The Housing Station provides several ownership and rental housing options. Teens choose a home based on family size and their income. In general, housing costs should be no more than 30% of their net income. This station is a prerequisite station for the Utilities and Furniture Stations.

### **Utilities (Mandatory Purchase) \$ ✓**

The Utilities Station provides teens with the cost of their monthly utility bill based on the size of their home or apartment. Costs are determined based on the type of housing they select. They receive the costs of gas, electricity and water bills and have the option of selecting yard maintenance, cell phone plan, television and streaming entertainment, and internet service. The Housing Station is a prerequisite station to visit before visiting this station.

### **Furniture and Electronics (Mandatory Purchase) \$ ✓**

At the Furniture Station, teens have to acquire furniture for their home or apartment. They will choose low, moderate or high-cost furnishings and additional optional electronics. The Housing Station is a prerequisite station to visit before visiting this station.

### **Groceries (Mandatory Purchase) \$ ✓**

At the Groceries Station, teens choose food options for their family. They will choose from low, moderate, or high-cost "grocery baskets," depending on their lifestyle choice and the number of people in their household.

### **Childcare (Mandatory Purchase) \$ ✓**

At the Childcare Station, teens pay for childcare for their families. They will choose from options based on their child(ren)'s age.

### **Transportation (Mandatory Purchase) \$ ✓**

At the Transportation Station teens choose a mode of transportation based on their family size. They will choose from different types of vehicles, public transportation or a ride-share service.

**Insurance and Medical Care (Mandatory Purchase) \$ ✓**

The Insurance Station provides teens with insurance options based on their lifestyle. They will choose from mandatory insurance costs like health insurance and optional insurance coverages like car insurance, life insurance, and renter's insurance. They may also have to make additional insurance payments for medical, dental, and optical expenses if they get one of these life events at the Life's Unexpected Station.

**Life's Unexpected (Mandatory Purchase) \$ ✓**

The Life's Unexpected Station provides teens with random scenarios they need to react to. This may result in teens needing to visit other stations in response to their scenario.

**Clothing (Mandatory Purchase) \$ ✓**

The Clothing Station provides teens with the option to purchase clothing for themselves and their family. They will choose options that include lifestyle, occupation, and family size options.

**Financial Counseling (Mandatory for Gameplay) ✓**

Teens visit this station if they have a financial problem. The Station Manager assists them in devising a way to improve their situation by reducing expenses, finding a part-time job, or getting a loan.

**Grooming (Optional Purchase)**

The Grooming station provides teens with options for haircare, beauty, and grooming services for themselves and family members. Teens can choose whether to purchase grooming services. They can choose between hairstyle options and other grooming services.

**Legal (Mandatory Purchase) \$ ✓**

The Legal Station provides teens with the option to draft a will. They can also address any legal costs incurred by an unexpected event and other related consequences.

**Pet and Veterinarian (Optional Purchase)**

The Pet and Veterinarian Station provides teens with the option to pay for costs related to a pet. Teens can choose whether to purchase a pet and have the opportunity to name them. However, if they draw a Life's Unexpected card where they acquire a pet, they must make purchases at this station. Teens have the option to choose a cat or dog and pay for vet and grooming costs, such as an annual check-up, vaccinations, food, and supplies. If this station is not used, removed the Life's Unexpected cards (#20; #25) requiring teens to visit this station.

### **Charitable Contributions (Optional Purchase)**

The Charitable Contributions station provides teens with the opportunity to support their favorite cause/s. Teens can choose whether or not to make a contribution. They have the option to donate to their favorite nonprofit charity, like Boys & Girls Clubs, American Heart Association, American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, American Cancer Association, etc. The Station Manager encourages teens to see the value of supporting various charities as well the benefit of charitable contributions as income tax deductions.

### **Entertainment and Travel (Optional Purchase)**

Depending on the amount remaining on their Budget Tracking Form, teens may select a vacation option or another form of entertainment. If they are not able to afford entertainment or travel at this time, the Station Manager shows teens how to budget and save each month for something they would like in the future.

### **Teen Evaluation (Mandatory for Gameplay) ✓**

When teens have visited all stations, they complete an evaluation form that helps Club and Youth Center Professionals determine if the objectives are being met and learn what impact the experience had on teens' perspectives on personal finance and future plans. Teens who chose to invest at the beginning of the game also get to see the amount of their nest egg at this station. This station is mandatory in order to support the Banking and Investing Station. Although completing an evaluation is optional, teens should be encouraged to complete an evaluation when they arrive at this station.