

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 hairstyles options and other grooming services.

Legal (Mandatory Purchase) \$ ✓

The Legal Station provides teens with the option to draft legal documents. 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.

Handout

STATION MANAGER EVALUATION FORM

Thank you for taking time to participate in Reality Store. We would appreciate you taking a few minutes to offer any comments or suggestions you may have. We are always looking for ways to improve this program, and your feedback is very valuable.

1. I am a here as a(n):
 - Adult volunteer
 - Teen Volunteer
 - Club and Youth Center Professional

2. Which station(s) did you manage?

3. Do you think that Reality Store helped teens:
 - a. Envision their lifestyle in their late 20s? Yes No
 - b. Explore an occupation they may have as an adult? Yes No
 - c. Discover if their occupation financially supports their lifestyle? Yes No
 - d. Budget and spend based on one month's salary from their career? Yes No
 - e. Handle some of life's unexpected events? Yes No

4. What valuable lessons do you think teens learned during the event?

Comments _____

5. What themes, questions, or decision-making pitfalls did you observe among teens?

6. What was your favorite part of the Reality Store event?

7. What would you like to see changed about the Reality Store event?

The background is a light blue field filled with a repeating pattern of white line-art icons. These icons include school supplies like pencils, paper clips, and rulers, as well as financial symbols like dollar signs, arrows pointing up, and gears. The overall theme is education and financial literacy.

5

Preparing Teens

Teen Preparation Activities

To help teens gain as much as possible from their experience in Reality Store, it is important to lay some groundwork with them ahead of time. The following general guidelines will help you make the most of the preparation activities included in this section.

1. **Integrate Reality Store into Money Matters: Make it CountSM Programming:** When supported and integrated into the Money Matters Targeted Program, Reality Store can have a large impact on teens who are preparing their best future financial selves. For an increased impact on Club and Youth Center Teens, it is recommended that Reality Store Experience is completed after teens have finished all of the sessions in Units 1 and 2. Reality Store also includes a pre-session and a post-session for teens to plan and reflect around their Reality Store Experience. After teens have experienced Reality Store they are able to further apply those learnings in Unit 3 of Money Matters. Additionally, some teens may have already participated in Money Matters previously and will be familiar with basic financial skills. Continue to refer to Money Matters in order to help them remember the financial concepts that they have already learned.
2. **Complete the Activities in Order:** The preparation activities are designed to be completed in the order in which they are presented here. Through these brief activities, teens begin to form an idea about the type of occupation they may want to do in the future and the type of lifestyle they would like to have. Later, when they participate in the Reality Store event, they discover how well a specific career provides the resources needed in order to have the lifestyle they want.
3. **Provide Opportunities To Practice:** In order to participate in a Reality Store event, all teens must have an individual copy of the Personal Profile and Budget Tracking Form. Make sure that all teens understand and have the chance to practice how to record expenses, deposits and keep a running balance in their Budget Tracking Form. The ability to do this is an integral part of Reality Store experience. See Section Six: Materials for Teens to review these forms page 55.
4. **Keep the Focus on Career Choice:** It is important to give teens salary information (starts on page 70) after they select their occupation or career. Selection or assignment should not be influenced by salary. An important part of the learning experience of Reality Store is discovering that a given occupation may not provide sufficient income to support a desired lifestyle. If a teen does not have any idea what occupation they would like to have, the default occupation would be one that pays minimum wage, since without adequate planning, preparation and education, higher-paying jobs would be difficult to obtain.
5. **Integrate BGCA's Other Targeted Programs for Teens:** If you are currently running the CareerLaunch and/or diplomas to Degree targeted programs at your Club and Youth Center, integrating activities from these programs will give teens an even stronger foundation for the Reality Store event and your overall Money Matters program.
 - › **CareerLaunch** meets teens where they are right now, giving them the chance to explore various careers based on their interests and talents. It also helps them determine the educational path they need to pursue, and guiding them in mapping out a plan for their future. Reality Store works backward from the future, providing teens a glimpse of their lives when they are in their late 20s and allowing them to experience first-hand how well their assigned or chosen career allows them to have the lifestyle they would like to have.
 - › There are several CareerLaunch sessions that are particularly helpful for reinforcing teen's Reality Store experience and overall Money Matters experience

- Session 1: What Is My Vision for the Future?
 - Session 2: What Does a Career Provide?
 - Session 3: What's the Difference between a Job and a Career?
 - Session 4: How is the World of Work Organized?
 - Session 5: What Are Potential Careers?
 - Session 6: Predicting the Jobs of the Future: How Do I Prepare?
 - Session 12: What is My Long-Range Plan?
- › **diplomas to Degrees (d2D)** encourages teens to make connections between their interests and future career paths, plan and prepare to enter postsecondary education, and develop the social-emotional skills and attributes to be successful in their educational endeavors. Module 1 focuses on envisioning the lifestyle they would like to have and exploring how their passions and interests can help them find the education and career to meet that lifestyle.
 - › There are several d2D sessions in Module One that are particularly helpful for reinforcing teen's Reality Store experience and overall Money Matters experience:
 - Session 4: Lifestyle Reality
 - Session 5: Discovering My Passions
 - Session 6: Exploring My Career Options
 - Session 7: Exploring Types of Postsecondary Education
6. **Facilitate Teen-Centered Learning:** By letting teens take the lead in activities, you keep them actively engaged in learning, motivate them to work with their peers, and encourage them to reflect on the new knowledge they are gaining. Your role becomes one of a guide and coach, as you allow teens to work together to find the answers and solutions they seek.
7. **Use the preparation and reflection sessions with teens:** Helping teens prepare for their Reality Store experience and reflect about it afterwards can help maximize the impact of the event. The teen preparation and reflection sessions can help you do this with your teens. The preparation and reflection sessions should be selected based on the model you are doing.
- › **The planning session (Reality Store Planning):** helps teens prepare for gameplay by helping them envision a future and select their careers. For the **Standard Version** this should be conducted after Unit 2 of your Money Matters program before implementing Reality Store, ideally a week before your event. For the **Stand-Alone Event** this should be completed on the same day of the event right before it starts. This session takes about 60 minutes to complete.
 - › **The reflection session (Reality Store Revisited):** allows teens to reflect on their Reality Store experience. For the **Standard Version** the session will help teens use what they learned throughout the rest of Money Matters. It should be implemented within a week of completing your event and before you facilitate Unit 3. For the **Stand-Alone Event** complete this session immediately after the event is finished. This session takes approximately 60 minutes to complete.

Following this on pages 42-54 are a set of teen preparation and reflection sessions that can be used for all versions. When relevant, specific prompts for the Standard Version and Stand-Alone Event are highlighted within the sessions by boxes.