



# Working Hard

**IN THIS ACTIVITY,** the participants will discuss and define child labor.

TIME REQUIRED: 20 MINUTES | INTENDED FOR GRADES 1-5



social studies



government



economics



mathematics

## MATERIALS NEEDED

- » Butcher paper
- » Markers
- » Visit [worldvision.org/lp/acsi-teacher-resources](http://worldvision.org/lp/acsi-teacher-resources) for a video you can show to support this lesson. (optional)

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## Activity Steps

**BEGIN THE ACTIVITY BY ASKING** the participants to call out various types of work they do, the number of hours they spend doing the work, and whether or not they get paid. As they call out the information, note these details on a sheet of butcher paper. Lead a discussion with the participants about the costs and benefits of each type work for them, their families, and society.

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**DISCUSS WITH THE PARTICIPANTS** the types and/or conditions of work that they feel are unsuitable for young people. Invite the participants to also discuss any reasons why young people might be engaged in work that is unsuitable or under unsatisfactory conditions.

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### OFFER THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS:

- » One of every 10 children in the world today are child laborers doing work that damages their mental, physical, or emotional development. Children work because their survival, and that of their families, depends on it.

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- » Some work carried out by children and young people is not considered child labor, e.g., helping with appropriate tasks on the family farm after school, assisting with chores around the house, or engaging in paid, part-time employment. Such child work can be a valuable way for children to learn new skills, such as developing responsibility, learning how to manage money, and experiencing the work environment in preparation for future employment and participation in society.
- » Child laborers work in a variety of jobs. They are employed as domestic workers in homes, as laborers on farms, or as workers in industries such as garment-making or fireworks factories. They may create their own employment by performing tasks such as shoe shining, picking through garbage dumps, or selling small items on the street. In conflict situations, children may be voluntarily or forcibly recruited to join armed groups. Most child laborers are not protected by laws and regulations.
- » Many individuals, governments, and organizations are working toward a world that no longer tolerates child labor. They consider child labor unacceptable and one of the most urgent issues of our time.

**ARRANGE THE PARTICIPANTS INTO GROUPS OF FOUR OR FIVE.** Explain that you are going to read five scenarios to them. The groups then must decide whether each scenario describes child labor and give reasons for their answers. Read each of the following scenarios:

- » **SCENARIO 1—ROSIE**  
Rosie is 13 years old and attends school every day. When she gets home from school, she must prepare dinner and look after her 5-year-old sister for two hours until her mother gets home from work. She is a diligent student who usually spends the evening completing her homework but sometimes spends time relaxing with her friends.
- » **SCENARIO 2—JIMBO**  
Jimbo's school is overcrowded and poorly run. He knows his parents are struggling to pay the school fees because they often can't afford the food the family needs to eat properly. Jimbo is 11 years old. He decides to drop out of school and try his hand at working as a recycler in the streets. In this way, he can help with the family income.
- » **SCENARIO 3—HOPE**  
Hope finished school at age 14 because her mother got a new job and her parents told her they needed her to do the housework. So Hope now works from 6 a.m. until 7 p.m., cooking, cleaning, shopping, doing laundry, and caring for her younger brothers and sisters. She would like to have time to visit her friends, but she is just too tired in the evenings.
- » **SCENARIO 4—JOSEPH**  
Joseph is 10 years old. His family has a small farm. When harvest time comes around, Joseph is expected to help out after school and full time during the weekends for about three weeks. This is hard work and very tiring for Joseph. He sometimes falls asleep during class at this time of the year. His classmates laugh at him but understand.
- » **SCENARIO 5—RADHA**  
Radha's parents were unable to pay a debt they owed. The moneylender arranged for Radha's labor to be a "bond" until the debt was paid. Radha, who is 12 years old, now works in a match factory. She is expected to work 10-hour days, sitting on the floor. Her boss refuses to pay her on the days he thinks she has not done enough work.

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**ALLOW TIME FOR GROUP DISCUSSION.** Discuss group answers with the participants and provide the following correct answers:

- » Scenarios 1 and 4 are not child labor. The chores Rosie and Joseph do are not exploitative or harmful, nor do they interfere with their education or development. They are part of family life.
- » Scenarios 2, 3, and 5 are child labor. In all three cases, the children are being denied an education and their chance to develop as children. Scenarios 3 and 5 are also exploitative.

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**CONCLUDE BY INVITING THE PARTICIPANTS TO JOIN YOU IN PRAYER.**

Pray for children around the world who are being harmed by child labor. Pray for people trying to help these children; pray for a transformation of those who are forcing children into these roles.

