

LESSON SAMPLE



Talking with children and youth about Sweat-Free Ts

Note to teachers:

The following script is intended to introduce Sweat-Free Ts to upper elementary and middle school-age students. It should be easily adaptable for younger and older groups.

We have been careful to avoid making the children and youth feel guilty about the clothing that they are wearing, as it is very difficult (if not impossible) to avoid sweatshop-produced clothing. Instead, we offer Sweat-Free Ts as a beginning step toward a hoped-for future. The children and youth need to understand that, by wearing a Sweat-Free shirt, they are making a statement about the way they want the world to be—the way God intends the world to be.

The clothes that we all wear are made in factories all over the world.

If you look at the labels in your shirts and pants—even your underwear—you’ll see the names of many different countries.

[If you have time, check the tags in the collars of the shirts the children or youth are wearing—perhaps locating the countries on a large map. The children or youth can help each other.]



Girls apply toxic cement with bare hands making Keds shoes in China

In many of those factories, the workers are young women, not much older than you (as young as 10 years old in Bangladesh). Often, they have to work long hours, six days a week. They’re not allowed to stop and go to the bathroom when they need to. They sleep in very crowded dormitories. And they don’t make much money—maybe only a dollar or two a day. People call these types of factories “sweatshops.”

[Show sweatshop and dormitory pictures.]

Some people in America, especially people who follow Jesus, feel bad about the way these young women have to work to make our clothes. Sometimes we wish that we could buy ONLY clothes that were NOT made in sweatshops. But that can be very hard, because companies don’t tell us about the factories that make our clothes; they only tell us the countries where they’re made. If we could go and look, we would pick clothes made in good factories, where people are treated fairly and have time to eat, and go to the bathroom, and have days off to visit their families, or go to school.

People in our church want to tell the clothing manufacturers that this is what we want for ALL our clothes. We don't want sweatshop clothes. That's why the t-shirts we made for our [Bible School / Mission Trip / Choir / Hunger Walk, etc] are Sweat-Free Ts. You see, we know where these shirts were made. They were made in Nicaragua in Central America [show map] by these women. [show pictures of women]



The women built their own factory and they make the rules for the factory. They decide when they need to stop to eat or go to the bathroom. They talk together to decide what days they will work. And they make enough money to take care of their families. They call their company COMAMNUVI—which means Cooperative of Sewing Women of Nueva Vida (Cooperativa de Maquilador Mujeres de Nueva Vida). [show the label in the shirt.]

[There is also a video of the women of Comamnuvi on the Sweat-Free T website: www.pcusa.org/sweatfree.]

When you wear this shirt and someone asks “What’s a Sweat Free T?” [show sweat-free T logo on the sleeve], you can tell them that it’s a shirt that’s NOT made in a sweatshop. If they’re interested, you can tell them about the women and their factory in Nicaragua. If someone jokes and asks “Can’t you sweat in that shirt?” you can laugh with them and say: “I can sweat in this shirt, but other people didn’t *have* to sweat to make it.” That way people will know that it’s important to you that all people are treated fairly. And if enough of us wear “Sweat-Free Ts” maybe the big companies will listen and change the way they run their factories.

Enclosures

1. Picture of sweatshop workers
2. Picture of sweatshop dormitory
3. Map of the world
- 4-5. Two pictures of COMAMNUVI members in their factory
6. Picture of Sweat-Free T logo
7. Flyer for Sweat-Free T-shirts from Nicaragua
8. Brochure for Sweat-Free T program of the PC(USA)

To order Sweat-Free T-shirts call Presbyterian Distribution Service at (800) 524-2612 and request PDS # 74360-03-332 (white shirts, \$2.75 each) or PDS # 74365-05-332 (natural color organic cotton, \$4.25 each). Please have your shipping address and your size selections ready (Child S and M, and Adult S, M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL) when placing your order. Thank you!

Prepared by the Presbyterian Hunger Program, which imports Sweat-Free Ts from COMAMNUVI as part of the Enough for Everyone program of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

For more info visit www.pcusa.org/sweatfree or contact Melanie Hardison at (888) 728-7228 x5626 or enough@ctr.pcusa.org.

