

#getcoinmoving



Financial Inclusion Parent Discussion Guide

Teach your children about financial inclusion and how cash is the most inclusive payment option!

Age Range: teens

Materials: [Cost of Cashless](#) (optional reading)

Background

As you've likely heard or seen in the news recently, the U.S. is experiencing a scarcity of coins as a result of the pandemic. What's happened is that as the economy has slowed down, so has face-to-face spending. While in-person transactions often include cash and coin, purchases under pandemic conditions are more likely to be online or electronic transactions. As a result, coins are sitting around our homes instead of out in the economy being used for purchases.

This issue is so widespread that we started a #getcoinmoving campaign to encourage everyone to move coins out of their homes and back into circulation. And, it's as straightforward as cashing your coins in at a bank or a coin aggregator like Coinstar.

Teachable Moment

So, the question comes up, "Why, in our modern economy, do we still need coins?" The answer has to do with banking services. That's because in order to make an electronic payment, you need some type of debit or credit card and those cards are generally issued by a bank.

Estimates show that 25% of Americans don't have access to or underuse banking services. Instead, they rely on cash and coins to pay bills and make purchases. Without cash and coins in circulation, it's harder for "underbanked" people to buy the goods and services they need and to fully participate in the economy.

It would be a cause for concern if businesses decided to only accept electronic forms of payment, as that would disadvantage cash-only consumers. An inclusive financial system provides people with many types of payment options, including cash and coins. This is also known as 'financial inclusion'.

A move to a cashless society has been on people's minds over the past few years and the pandemic has highlighted businesses' motivation for cashless transactions. However, the needs of consumers who rely on cash are important to consider across the country.

Great article on the [Cost of Cashless](#)

Option #1 – Discussion

1. Kick off the conversation by bringing up the historic nature of the pandemic and discuss those changes with your teen:
 - a. “I know you already know we’re living through a historic moment right now – but it’s still hard to believe how much the pandemic has changed things. What feels like the biggest change for you?”
2. Introduce the scarcity of coins issue, and give your teen a chance to talk about how payments have or haven’t changed during the pandemic:
 - a. “One of the weird things that happened because of the pandemic is a lack of coins in circulation – have you or your friends heard about it?”
 - b. “I guess in some ways it makes sense right? Since we’re sheltering-in-place, we haven’t been able to go to stores or shops as much as we used to. How would you say we’ve changed our buying habits?”
3. Ask your teen to speculate on why we still need coins and cash in a modern economy and talk through their thoughts:
 - a. “The lack of coins in circulation is turning out to be a pretty big problem. Why do you think, in a modern economy, we even need coins or cash for that matter?”
4. Introduce the idea of financial inclusion, and discuss why it’s important that cash and coins are circulating in the economy:
 - a. “I was reading that there are actually many people who rely on cash for a lot of their transactions – from paying rent to buying groceries. And, some people get paid in cash. It’s almost one in every four people who don’t use banking services or who rely on cash and coin for all or some of their purchases.”
 - b. “What do you think about the idea of a ‘cashless society?’ How does it benefit some people and disadvantage others?”
 - c. “What would you say to a business that doesn’t want to accept cash?”
 - d. “Who do you think should be responsible for ‘financial inclusion?’ How important is financial inclusion?”
5. Wrap up the conversation by bringing it back to the coin scarcity issue and cashing in the coins sitting around your home.
 - a. “That was a great conversation! We started out talking about coins not circulating, and we ended up talking about financial inclusion – really helpful for us to talk through these important issues.”
 - b. “How about we help out by rounding up our coins and getting them back into circulation by cashing them in at a bank or at the Coinstar.”

Option #2 – Read and Discuss

1. If you're looking for something a little more focused, consider asking your teen to read the article ["The Cost of Cashless"](#) and discuss the following questions.
 - a. "How often does the article author, Raynil, use cash, and why?" (Rarely--he likes to use electronic and other payment types.)
 - b. "What does 'financial inclusion mean'?" (Many forms of payment are available, including cash.)
 - c. "What does it mean to be 'unbanked'?" (It means not having access to banking services because you don't have a checking or savings account with a bank.)
 - d. "Looking at the bar chart, how do unbanked or underbanked people pay for their housing expenses? Hint: it's the purple bar in the third chart." (They pay housing expenses with cash.)
 - e. "How would you explain the problem of 'cashless' communities to your cousin? Would you tell your cousin it is unfair and why?" (Not all people have bank accounts or debit/credit cards; unbanked and underbanked people rely on cash for their wages and to make payments. It seems unfair to not be able to use cash to pay basic bills like rent.)
 - f. "Why does Raynil say cash is the most inclusive type of payment?" (It includes people with and without bank accounts; it doesn't leave out people who are unbanked.)

The economy needs you! After doing this activity, make sure your family gets their coins back into circulation!