

# Economic Prosperity | FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## SPENT: PLAYER IMPACT GUIDE

Age 13+ | 1-2 Hours

*“Gaming is such a huge influence and with so many people spending literally millions of hours tending virtual farms, we thought why not bring gamers face-to-face with a very real issue like homelessness that affects us all.”*

--Jonathan Cude, Chief Executive Officer, McKinney



### ABOUT SPENT

*Spent* is a game about negotiating the realities of poverty and financial responsibility, and how small choices can stack up to make the best intentioned, financially responsible people look anything but responsible. By increasing awareness of the struggles of low-income parents, the Urban Ministries of Durham hoped to change the fate of struggling citizens. In fact, *Spent's* success has helped raise more than \$45,000 to provide food, clothing, shelter and supportive services for the citizens of Durham, while creating awareness all over the world. For more information, visit: <http://playspent.org>

### THEME FOR THIS GUIDE: Financial Responsibility

*Spent* is about learning and experiencing the reality of poverty. The player is a single parent with only \$1,000 to live on for a month. Through this month, he or she must fulfill his or her adult duties: find a job, buy groceries, choose a health plan, and pick a location to live. This game focuses on financial responsibility, which is the ability to control money in a way that is law-abiding and beneficial.

<p><b>WHY USE THIS GUIDE?</b></p>	<p>In this guide, we invite you to think about <i>Spent</i> as a model of economic prosperity. As you play, reflect on your experience. How is your view about financial responsibility changing as you are playing the game? What are your priorities when it comes to spending money?</p> <p><i>Answer the questions below and add up your points when you are finished!</i></p>
<p><b>GAME BASICS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose a job, and play through the month. How did your choice impact your month? [+1]</li> <li>• Choose a health care plan. Which plan did you choose? What made you choose that plan? [+1]</li> <li>• Now pick a place to live. Where did you choose to live? What are the benefits and costs of that choice and why? [+2]</li> <li>• Eventually you will be prompted to buy groceries. What did you buy for groceries? How did your choices affect the rest of your month? [+2]</li> <li>• Complete an entire month without losing. In what ways could you earn extra money? What were some unexpected costs? [+3]</li> </ul>
<p><b>THEME INSIGHTS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you began the game you had to pick a job. How did that job affect what you could afford? [+1]</li> <li>• In <i>Spent</i> you undoubtedly had to make some tough moral choices when you didn't have enough money. How did your financial challenges affect your ability to be responsible? [+2]</li> <li>• When you faced difficult situations in the game, how did your financial priorities change and why? [+3]</li> <li>• Sometimes you would have to give up a luxury in order to survive. What did you give up because you either had no money or chose to save? [+3]</li> </ul>
<p><b>WORLD CONNECTIONS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Spent</i> throws in many situations that force you to make a decision whether to abide the law or not. When have your real life financial concerns affected your choices? How were your choices influenced? [+1]</li> <li>• This game paints a very realistic picture of the struggle of poverty. Did playing change the way you think about your own or other's struggles with money and if so, how? [+2]</li> <li>• Money might have been the biggest aspect of the game, but there were other elements that could affect you. Other than learning the importance of saving money, what other skills did you learn? [+2]</li> <li>• <i>Spent</i> focuses on poverty and finances at its core. What systemic effects related to poverty were in the game? How do they correspond to your life? [+3]</li> </ul>

**Bonus Challenge:** Challenge yourself to go one week with a budget limited to 10% of what you normally would spend. How does this affect your life? What did you learn about what you really need as opposed to what you want? Post it to YouTube, and share the link on the Center for Games & Impact Facebook page at <http://facebook.com/gamesandimpact>.