

# CAPSTONE PROGRAM ~ ELECTIVES ~ HOLISTIC HEALTH

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_



An emphasis on hot-button topics, including the obesity epidemic as well as a larger look at the obstacles to healthier lifestyles thrown up by the food industry, place cowriter/director Stephanie Soechtig's **Fed Up** firmly in the subgenre of cautionary documentaries that includes *Food Inc.* and *Fat, Sick & Nearly Dead*. Soechtig and her creative team, including co-writer Mark Monroe and narrator and executive producer Katie Couric, trace the obesity crisis to 1977 when a new set of government dietary guidelines offered a flawed nutrition model based on calories in and calories out without taking other factors—such as the harm caused by sugar—into consideration. Using lively graphics, timely archival clips and multiple interviews, Soechtig charts how food industry politics, money and lobbying muscle have acted in concert to determine America's nutritional choices. A pointed, issues-oriented documentary, **Fed Up** makes complex science and vague politics accessible and engaging as it answers big questions regarding the food industry and shows how its influence has expanded waistlines while compromising health.

**While watching the movie, jot down notes to help you prepare for a discussion on the following questions.**

**We will have a detailed discussion throughout the movie.**

## **OPENING QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:**

**What do you think it means to be healthy? What is a balanced diet and a healthy lifestyle?**

**What challenges and pressures do young people today face when they try to create a healthy lifestyle?**

**How can you find a balance between practicing good nutrition and loving your body the way that it is?**



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: "FED UP"

1. What challenges and pressures do young people today face when they try to create a healthy lifestyle?
2. What is the impact of the message that weight loss is as simple as diet and exercise? Is this true for the experience of the young people in film? What else will impact weight loss?
3. Did watching Fed Up make you think about your own school's food policy? Your family's food consumption? Did it make you think of any changes to your daily habits?
4. What media and cultural messages are young people exposed to that work against healthy eating habits?
5. What did you think of the statement "Sugar is poison" and were you surprised by the sugar content of any of the foods listed in the movie?
6. Do you agree with the film's argument that the junk food industry should be regulated the way that the tobacco industry was regulated?
7. What needs to change to make American kids healthier?
8. How would you discuss with a politician about the cost of healthy vs. junk (unhealthy) foods?

9. What types of foods are making young people overweight?
10. Why is a calorie not a calorie? Explain the difference between almonds and soda with respect to calories.
11. What is processed food?
12. What are the dangers of eating unhealthy foods besides becoming fat?
13. What media and cultural messages are young people exposed to that work against healthy eating habits?
14. How can you tell the difference between healthy and unhealthy foods in the grocery store or in a restaurant?
15. Who are the kids and teenagers interviewed in **Fed Up**? Can you relate to these kids? What kinds of backgrounds do they come from? How did they become so overweight? Was it their fault? What steps are they taking to change their lifestyles and what challenges do they face along the way?
16. Describe the families that you meet in **Fed Up**. Are these caring parents? How are the parents in the film like or unlike your parents? What are the parents doing to try to help and support their children? Are these families successful at helping their children to be healthy? What additional support would make healthy eating easier for these families?
17. How does being overweight affect everyday life for the young people in the film? Do these kids struggle with bullying and teasing? How do they feel about themselves? Does weight affect their self-esteem? What is the impact of the message that weight loss is as simple as diet and exercise? Is that true, in the experience of the young people interviewed in this film? How are overweight kids treated in your school? What can you do to prevent bullying and raise awareness about the childhood obesity epidemic?
18. Do you think it was brave of these young people to appear in a film like **Fed Up**? If a filmmaker wanted to interview you about a sensitive subject, would you agree to appear in a film? Why do you think these kids wanted to be in the movie? What effect do you think their participation has on the overall impact of the film? Why do personal stories make social problems seem more urgent?