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Communication
Across Barriers

See Poverty...Be The Difference

An Insider Perspective On Improving Outcomes



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Guiding Questions

1. What does poverty teach and how does it impact our communities?
2. What have you been taught to believe about poverty and those who live in it?
3. What are the realities and facts about the daily life experiences of poverty that we need to know to support students who live in poverty?
4. What can we do to improve outcomes for students in poverty?





A New Paradigm

- A Deeper Understanding Of Poverty And Those Who Live In It
- A Strength's Perspective Approach: Stand In Awe
- A NASA Attitude: Failure Is Not An Option
- Stronger Partnerships: Within and Without
- Collective Approach Verses Single Focused, Fragmented Efforts



Paradigm Shift

1. What was spent on pets for Valentines Day 2013?

___1 million ___ 815 million ___10 million

What was spent on Hannah Montana, High School Musical, and Disney Princess merchandise in the height of the recession?

___ 20 million ___ 12 billion ___ 26 billion

2. What is the amount spent in October on Halloween costumes?

___1 million ___ 900 million ___ 80 million

3. What is the average spent on a person for one year in prison?

___ 9000 ___ 18,000 ___ 34,000

4. How much money was spent on video games in one month last year?

___ 35 million ___ 1.5 billion ___ 25.3 billion

What does poverty teach?

- No one cares
- Everyone seems smarter
- Something is wrong with me
- We don't belong
- People like us do not get educated
- We don't have what we need
- There is no one to help





What does poverty teach?

Family Loyalty...I love my family. They love me.

He's my brother





What does poverty teach?

Poverty pulls are strong.

We can not ignore the impacts of poverty on learning. We must build in the luxury to learn.

Students need:

1. Basic Supports
2. Academic Supports (internal
3. and external capacities)
4. Mentors and Navigators who have benefited from education
4. Community Supports



What does poverty teach?

Constant Crisis: People are sick more and in survival mode

Two Strategies:

1. Examine policies/rules to ensure they are setting people up for success;
2. Make it a priority for educators to know about local resources for breaking poverty barriers.





Work to understand and build Internal and external capacity.

Danny born healthy---Thanks to people mentoring and navigating of resources into our lives: Community Action, Women In Transition, Head Start and WIC.





Some Poverty Impacts:

- Hopelessness
- Purpose of education or job unclear
- Not knowing subjects/norms/vocabulary
- Stereotypes, myths, and judgements
- Internalized personal deficiency
- Poverty realities pull and demand attention
- Trained Incapacity: Expectations diminished by poverty conditions

Defining Poverty CONTEXT



Generational Poverty

- Family work the land, rarely own it
- Never knew anyone who benefited from education
- Never knew anyone who moved up or who was respected in a job
- Highly mobile and limited literacy
- Students and families in this context, will likely focus on making it through the day

Defining Poverty CONTEXT



Working, But Still In Poverty

- Working, but rarely have money for any extras
- Most do not own property
- Live pay check to pay check
- Students and families in this context, may focus on two weeks or a month out. Rarely see themselves as “education” material
- Poverty seen as personal deficiency

Defining Poverty CONTEXT



Immigrant Poverty

- Have little or no resources
- Language and culture barriers
- May not understand school norms/behavior
- Seem to do better than those born into poverty in America
- Poverty viewed as a system problem

Defining Poverty CONTEXT



Situational Poverty

- Surrounded by people who are educated or able to earn a living wage
- Attends school regularly and expects to do well
- Has health care, divorce or other crisis and income drops
- Generally is able to use networks and prior experiences to make it back to middle-class
- Has not internalized the poverty as personal problem
- Does not recognize advantages of growing up middle-class
- Can be harsh judge of those in generational and working class poverty



Views of Poverty

1. Caused by individual or family irresponsibility...

Policies: If we punish people, they will stop acting poor.

2. Individuals did not learn middle class values...

Policies: Teach people to be more middle class.

3. Caused by race, class or gender barriers to education, housing, employment, and health care.

Policies: Single-focused efforts to break barriers.

4. Poverty is complex.

Policies: Requires systemic / connected / collaborative approach



Support actions and policy to improve outcomes for people who live in poverty that include:

1. Strengths based focus: Potential is unknown. Work to raise expectations and provide network of supports.
2. Build Resiliency: Promote a focus on what people are doing right.
3. Asset Theory—Search Institute: Build supports in the community.
4. Social Capital Theory---Break isolation! We are segregated by “class.” Encourage efforts to connect students in poverty with mentors who can navigate resources and opportunities.

Five Keys For Improving Outcomes

- **Believe** people can make it out of poverty.
- **Get involved:** It takes all of us to create the kinds of communities that work for everyone.
- **Recognize and highlight knowledge and skills** that students/ and families already have.
- **Gain poverty competency:** A deeper understanding of poverty and its impacts on people, are essential for breaking barriers.
- **Examine community-wide policies, programs and rules** to ensure we are actually serving, not punishing or ignoring, the realities of poverty that students and families face.
- **Build a collective approach** to address the complexities of poverty.





Dan with Austin

It's "who you know"

No one in poverty gets educated/moves forward without good leadership and actions to break barriers.

It's in your hands. What can you do? If not you, then who?





1. The wealthy Native American woman opened her purse.
2. The purse contained money.
3. The wealthy Native American woman had opened the door to her car.
4. The middle-class African American man was a thief.
5. The poor White parking garage attendant was the man at the car door.
6. The middle-class African American man took the contents of the purse.
7. There was a man inside the car.
8. The middle-class African American took the money.
9. The wealthy Native American woman owned the car.
10. The middle-class African American man was a passenger.



RESOURCES:

- Upcoming 2013 Poverty and Coaching Institutes,
- Become an Opportunity Community,
- New!! Action Approach For Educating Students: The curriculum kit includes a two-hour training dvd, along with 10, 68 page companion guidebooks,
- Poverty 101 online course for graduate or undergraduate credit,
- Free Newsletter with tips for breaking barriers,
- Follow us on FB for latest research and tips:

<http://www.facebook.com/donna.m.beegle>

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