

Understanding Children Affected by Poverty

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Introduction

This newsletter is designed so that educators can better understand children affected from poverty. Poverty can be viewed from a variety of viewpoints; including financial, emotional, mental, spiritual and physical. Support systems, resources, relationships and role models play a critical role as intervening factors. Some key beliefs about poverty are:

- 1) Poverty is relative
- 2) Poverty occurs in all races
- 3) Economic class is a continuous line not a clear cut distinction
- 4) There is a difference between generational and situational poverty.

Statistics

1. In the United States in 2001, poverty rates for all individuals was 11.7%. For children under the age of 18, the poverty rate was 16.3%, and for children under the age of 6, the rate was 18.2%.
2. There were 6.8 million poor families (9.2% in 2001, up from 6.4 million (6.7%) in 2000.

Things to learn
to help children
affected by
poverty

- Identify the resources necessary to help students move from poverty to success
- Practice a variety of intervention skills to assist students with discipline and academic achievement
- Learn the role that language plays in poverty situations
- Experience the hidden roles that exist in social structures
- Learn the characteristics of generational poverty
- Identify role models and support systems that schools can use as interventions

Statistics Continued

3. The foreign-born population in the United States has increased 57% since 1990 to total of 30 million. In 2000 one of every five children under age 18 in the U.S. was estimated to have at least one foreign-born parent. Immigrant children are twice as likely to be poor as native borne children. Among children whose parents work full time, immigrant children are at greater risk of living in poverty than native-born children (National Center for Children in Poverty, Columbia University, 2002)
4. Regardless of race or ethnicity, poor children are much more likely than non-poor children to suffer developmental delay and damage, to drop out of high school, and to give birth during the teen years (Miranda, 1991).
5. Poverty-prone children are more likely to be in single-parent families (Einbinder, 1993). Median female wages in the United States, at all levels of educational attainment, are 30 to 50% lower than male wages at the same level of educational attainment (*TS// Manual*, 1995, based on U.S. Census data, 1993).
6. Poor inner-city youths are seven times more likely to be the victims of child abuse or neglect than are children of high social and economic status (Renchler, 1993).
7. Poverty is caused by interrelated factors: parental employment status and earnings, family structure, and parental education (*Five Million Children*, 1992).
8. Children under age 6 remain particularly vulnerable to poverty. Children living in families with a female householder and no husband present experienced a poverty rate of 48.9% (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2001).
9. The United States' child poverty rate is substantially higher - often two or three higher - than that of most other major Western industrialized nations.