

Defining Poverty

Generational Poverty

- Family has never owned land
- Never knew anyone who benefited from education
- Never knew anyone who moved up or was respected in a job
- Highly mobile
- High family illiteracy
- Focus is on making it through the day

Working-Class Poverty

- Working, but rarely have money for any extras
- Most do not own property
- Live paycheck to paycheck
- Few have health care
- Focus on making it two weeks or through the month
- Poverty seen as personal deficiency

Immigrant Poverty

- Have little or no resources
- Language & culture barriers
- Seem to do better than those born into poverty in America
- Poverty viewed as a system problem

Depression Era Poverty

- A time when the societal message was, "We are all in this together."
- Poverty seen as society problem

Middle-Class Temporary/Situational Poverty

- Person grows up in stable environment
- Surrounded by people who are educated or able to earn a living wage
- Attends school regularly
- Has health care
- Has a crisis (health, Divorce, etc.) and income drops
- Generally is able to make it back to middle class
- Has not internalized the poverty as their own fault



Concepts that Living in Poverty Teaches

Success - Generally unattainable, limited to people who have a lot of luck

Failure - Inevitable, no hope to overcome inherent deficiencies

Job - Does not pay in respect or a living wage; takes you away from your family

Emotions - Emotions are made to be expressed, publicly or privately

Future - Difficult and painful to envision, so live for now

Money - To be used before it gets away, not enough anyway

Police/Courts - Hurt people, the enemy, unfriendly, out to get us and should be avoided

Education - For "those" people, not people like me, takes you away from your family and causes additional stresses because you don't have the status symbols to belong (right clothes, shoes, food, car, house, etc.)

Teachers - The enemy, don't like people like me, make me feel unwanted, not cared about and stupid because I don't know things that others seem to have mastered

Health - Care non existent, if very sick go to emergency room, share prescription medicine, glasses, remedies

Doctors - Stay away and they can't tell you bad news, not seen as advocates or caring, are seen as "knowing everything"

Dentists - Fear! People we know don't go to the dentist. When they do go, tremendous hassle to find access and then a great deal of pain. Brushing and flossing are some rules "those" people made up, won't help me, other things more pressing than my teeth

Nutrition & Exercise - Not words we use, for people who have too much time and money on their hands, whatever is going to happen to your body will happen no matter what you do

Fate - Life happens, you have no power to change it, only to react to it

