Teaching with Poverty in Mind

- What Being Poor Does to Kids’ Brains and What Schools Can Do About It.
- Author: Eric Jenson
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- Presenters
  - Kelly Graybill
  - Shaun Orr
  - Deborah Shepherd
Jenson’s Definition of Poverty

**Definition of Poverty**
- A chronic and debilitating condition that results from multiple adverse synergistic risk factors and affects the mind, body and soul.

**Types of Poverty:**
- Situational
- Generational
- Absolute
- Relative
- Urban
Explanation of the Types of Poverty

- **Situational**: sudden crisis, usually temporary
- **Generational**: born into poverty, families don’t have the tools to get out of poverty.
- **Absolute**: scarcity of resources are available in general, day to day survival.
- **Relative**: economic status is not living up to society’s standard of living.
- **Urban**: stressors such as crowding, violence and noise and lack of services available.
- **Rural**: populations below 50,000; remote areas with lack of services.
Poverty in Our Schools: Case Study A

- Which type of poverty are most prevalent at your schools?
  - Relative
  - Generational
  - Urban

- How does the book’s definition of these types influence how you think and approach poverty?
  - For both schools it has influenced me to attempt to recognize how socio-economic factors may contribute to decreased academic performance and how the strength of those factors may be effectively minimized.
Poverty in Our Schools: Case Study B

- Which type of poverty are most prevalent at your schools?
  - Situational
  - Relative
  - Urban

- How does the book’s definition of these types influence how you think and approach poverty?
  - It is important to educate faculty on the types of poverty to inform them that poverty occurs at many levels, is due to a variety of reasons and has many faces. In addition, faculty should be encouraged to view the whole student as opposed to their characteristics.
Poverty in Our Schools: Case Study C

- Which type of poverty are most prevalent at your schools?
  - Generational
  - Relative
  - Urban

- How does the book’s definition of these types influence how you think and approach poverty?
  - Situational poverty has increased in the past few years and is now affected new families. While most of these families have been able to recover, it is getting harder to help the number of families dealing with generational and urban poverty.
Primary Risk Factors

- Four Primary Risk Factors Afflicting Families living in Poverty:
  - Emotional and Social Challenges
  - Acute and Chronic Stressors
  - Cognitive Lags
  - Health and Safety Issues
How Does Poverty Affect Students at Your School?

- For students experiencing Generational Poverty there typically is evidence of pervasive hopelessness and a lack of knowledge of post-High School options (i.e., college, university, etc.). If there is an awareness of post-High School options it is unclear how to make those options a reality.

- For students experiencing Relational Poverty they will attempt to compensate for their socio-economic differences by engaging in attention-seeking behaviors, rebelliousness or attempting to mimic the styles of the group they most admire.

- Students experiencing Urban Poverty deal with it in a variety of ways. Some students may be prone to generalize the loud and occasional violent behaviors of their home environments into the school. Some may view school as a refuge from their home environments and seek reasons to spend more time after school.
Poverty in Our Schools: Case Study B

- **How Does Poverty Affect Students at Your School?**
  - Everyday living is a struggle
  - Children are damaged physically, socio-emotionally and cognitively
  - Children often are not from a literature-rich home
  - More likely to have turbulent and unhealthy friendships/relationships
  - Have the attitude of less time to explore surroundings and more focus on surviving within it – (fight/flight)
Poverty in Our Schools: Case Study C

How Does Poverty Affect Students at Your School?

- One problem often leads to many reoccurring problems.
- Children living in poverty often have deficiencies in at least 2 areas of learning
- Children living in poverty have less exposure to the world and lack background knowledge and vocabulary
- Adolescents rely more on peers rather than adults for support
- Trouble forming friendships, low self-esteem, trouble with sense of environment and optimistic attitude all result from stress ridden attachments to caregivers and low income issues (depression, chemical dependency and hectic work schedules)
- Feelings of isolation and being unloved
Questions???
What do we mean by this term? What do we think of when we hear this term? 2 Poverty: A chronic and debilitating condition that results from multiple adverse synergistic risk factors and affects the mind, body and soul. 3 Six types of poverty: Situational poverty Generational poverty Absolute poverty Relative poverty Urban poverty Rural poverty. 4 RISK FACTORS: 1. Emotional and social challenges. Poverty involves a complex array of risk factors t Urban, Rural Suburban. Jensen. Teaching With Poverty in Mind. Bottom Line. • Kids from poverty are often different • Brains adapt to suboptimal conditions • But brains can and do change everyday • You can facilitate that change • Students can change, if you change first • You'll have to let go of every single excuse you've ever heard of • You can ensure your kids graduate • When you find out how to do it, will you? • ASCD Education Collection. Teaching With Poverty in Mind. School Library System Professional Book Collection Catalog. Engaging Students with Poverty in Mind. Presentation Materials. www.btboces.org ---Effective Teaching ---Teaching with Poverty in Mind. Resources.