

## **The Impact of Poverty On Young Children**

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Have you ever felt stuck, worried, anxious, hungry, sad and misunderstood? If you felt any of these emotions you understand the struggle of young children and their families that are in poverty. If you haven't, can you walk a mile in their shoes? The impact of poverty on young children is causing malnutrition, homelessness and distress. Poverty has affected millions of Americans. Majority of Americans become homeless due to poverty. I am advocating for more funding to social services to provide a safer, healthier and welcoming environment for families and children. Poverty causes homelessness which is a tremendous problem for children. It has an impact on their education, health, and overall development.

### **Effects of poverty on children's education**

Child fund (2013) states that poverty reduces a child's readiness for school because it leads to poor physical health and motor skills, diminishes a child's ability to concentrate and remember information, and reduces attentiveness, curiosity and motivation. Children from lower income families are more likely to have lower test scores and they are at higher risk of dropping out of school due to the situations occurring in their personal lives.

The effects of poverty on education have unique challenges in breaking that cycle of struggle, and reduce their chances for having a productive life. One way to bring change into these children's lives is by investing in organizations like Guardian

Angels. This organization helps protect young children and to improve access to education.

### **Effects of poverty on children’s emotional development**

Young children living in poverty are easily influenced by instability, hunger, insecurity but they are also more likely to experience behavioral problems, and social and emotional development difficulties (Malhomes 2012). Increased stress is a known causal factor through which poverty impacts developmental outcomes. Stress can lead to adverse changes in the cardiovascular system, the immune system and the neuroendocrine and cortical systems, which have implications for learning and decision-making (Aber, Morris & Raver, 2012). Stress can also have an impact on parents in their parenting skills. Living in poverty can cause the children to explore educational opportunities by neighborhoods not being safe and having educational resources (libraries). Stopping a child from experiencing new adventures (parks) which can improve their development.

Unfortunately the effects above can have a life long effect on children living in poverty. The outcomes children experience at one age can themselves operate as risk factors for additional negative outcomes at later ages. For example, poor emotional and behavioral self-control in early childhood, both related to growing up in poverty, are related to academic disciplinary problems in elementary and middle school-years, which is related to delinquency in adolescence (Aber, Morris & Raver, 2012). The health and mental-health effects mentioned above continue to exert influence on children as they mature through childhood into adulthood and live out their lives.

Children that are living in poverty are most likely to live in neighborhoods where crime rates are high. Kids are easily influenced, especially growing up in poverty. Growing up as a kid in Brownsville, Brooklyn, NY I had seen a lot of tragedies that young children shouldn't have experienced. I was 6 years old and my brother had a friend that would always come over. In our neighborhood there were shootings and robberies. Unfortunately his close friend was a victim of gun violence. I witnessed him getting gunned down while I was looking out of my family's window. I was young but that traumatic experience I will never forget. My family tried to keep my sibling and I away from that lifestyle and keep us from knowing about it but it's hard not falling into that type of lifestyle. We moved from that area a long time ago but that experience will always stick with me.

### **The Effects of malnutrition caused by poverty**

The food that is being provided for the poor is not benefiting their body on a cellular level. The food consumed is unrecognized from the body to carry out cellular functions to keep our people healthy. I would admit the food gives satisfaction of being filled however these foods are slowly harming the human body. The Food consumed will make these individuals prone to disease leading to a greater chance of developing diabetes, high blood pressure, heart attacks, neurotoxicological effects and some cancers. For instance majorities of shelters and corporation who help low income families mainly give out can foods which contain excessive sodium, BPA, lead, mercury and other heavy metals which leeches onto the food which is dangerous to the human system. The chemical that are added are used as preservative to increase shelf life

which is doing more harm than good for the body. According to Adams, Mike (2016), Food Forensics states "Organotin poses the most risk to humans due to its toxic effects. These forms include trimethyltin and triethyltin both of which exhibit neurotoxicological effects". The consumer has no idea the harm and side effects it eventually causes. Fast food companies are the largest corporations that are found Nearly every block of low incoming communities.

These large corporations make large amounts of money feeding the public hidden toxins that are poison to someone's health. I must admit the burgers and fries pizza we see on tv is appealing however it serves no nutritional value for the growth and development of the body. These diets are based upon denature highly refined ingredients where it's approved from the state which laboratories can use synthetically chemicalized substances to alter the taste texture and appearance. In the article (Capetta, Amy.2020) mentions "Potassium bromate is banned in Canada, the United Kingdom and European Union due to animal studies that found a possible link to cancerous tumors". These ingredients were never shown to the public or display on a package. Fried meals and snacks are likely to contain tertiary butylhydroquinone preservatives which are linked to alter the positive effect of probiotics in the stomach. In the Research journal Food Bioscience specified "Different food additives may affect the metabolomics of probiotics, which could subsequently influence human health." The ingredients added into these foods will make consumers addicted to their product not realizing more harm will occur in the body later in life.

These companies portray they are serving nutritional meals to gain trust from the public however there is no trace of vitamins and minerals being absorbed into the body. Low Income communities May feel satisfied after consuming a meal not understanding these meals have hidden toxins which will later cause a higher disease rate and malnutrition to develop within these areas. The food given doesn't serve any nutritional value of vitamins and minerals to keep the body healthy and strong. Diseases are at a higher rate because labs are adding artificial ingredients, without displaying and letting the communities know the effects these chemicals have on the body system most importantly fast food restaurants don't add labels on packages letting consumers know what ingredients are included.

To change malnutrition in low income communities it should be less fast food restaurants within the communities and more healthier restaurants within the low income communities. The government should donate more funding to social services that are in charge of low income housing to hire chefs who specialize in nutrition. We need more volunteers to educate low income families about nutrition, to help in shelters, healthy meal plans, donate fresh foods instead of cans and processed foods that are condense with chemicals. I believe more organic farms should visit these communities and educate their experience on health and nutrition. Also introduce people to this lifestyle while explaining the important of food and the nutritional value of foods on the body. Most importantly teach others how to grow small batches that are inexpensive and value in ones health. What's being taught will prevent malnutrition and other diseases to develop the lack of knowledge will eventually cause body destruction.

I used multiple sources to prove my point because they explained and had valid research on the effects of poverty on young childrens and family development. One of the sources is “ Food Forensics by Mike Adams and published in 2016 he explains the toxins in the food we eat today and how these chemicals damage our body within. This book relates to how in our low income communities are fed chemicalized toxins without knowing the impact it has on our health. This is the cause of many diseases within our Black and Latinos communities. The system doesn't share adequate facts on the product being sold to the consumers which make us knowledgeable about the chemicals being used. This book explains how our system cares more about money than one's health. This book will forever change your view of food safety, regulation and manufacturing.

My next source that I used is an article from “Child Trends”. This article highlighted five ways poverty is harmful to children. The article states how poverty harms the brain and other body systems. Children who experience poverty have an increased likelihood, extending into adulthood. Poverty creates and widens achievement gaps. In the article they stated that gaos are evident in key aspects of learning, knowledge and social emotional development. They also stated that when left unaddressed these early gaps become progressively wider. Early optimal development tends to open doors to further optimal development. So poor children lag behind their peers at entry to kindergarten in reading ability at the end of third grade. Poverty also leads to poor physical, emotional and behavioral health. Growing up poor increases the likelihood that children will have poor health, poor emotional and behavioral health.

Poverty can harm children through the negative effects it has on their families and the home environment. Parents experienced numerous challenges that can affect their own emotional well being as well as their children. Poor parents report higher stress than do higher income parents. Parents with poor economic resources face difficulty planning, preparing and providing for their families material needs. The source shows how children in poverty have a rough upbringing and it affects their overall health.

I believe communities that are in poverty need more role models of color who are in the same ethnicity and culture background to teach the young generation about the correct way of survival. By doing so we can have more youth centers in the communities so that the children can have places to continue their growth in education and distract them from what's going on in their personal life. And opening youth centers can help parents and families look for jobs and ways to get them out of their current situations. Mental health has a huge impact in the low income communities which causes anger, abandonment, self doubt, depression and many more. What will be great if we have more volunteers to be counselors for the youth and their families. The more we help within our communities we will have better outcomes for our youth.

To be able to have better resolutions for poverty. We need support from the government. Meaning funding shelters for remodeling and safer living conditions and safer environments. There are many shelters that are crowded, unsanitized and uncomfortable living situations. Families should be able to live comfortably even though they are in a rough situation. They do not deserve to be living like animals. Schools need more funding to hire more teachers to educate students and families about financing and businesses instead of having unnecessary classes that will have no use

in the future. If the schools are funded there will be more opportunities for children to learn and explore their capabilities in education. Funding for housing assistance as well is needed. We need housing organizations to protect mothers and children that are constantly being left on the street because of not being able to afford rent and other bills. This can prevent families from being homeless.

I chose this topic because poverty has caused a lot of tragedies in these families' homes for centuries. Poverty has caused children to go into deep depression and blacks and latinos have been going through these abuse for years. Low income families have been set up to fail. Instead of being pushed for the better we are being set up to be poor for more centuries. For example walking in a white neighborhood you will see more doctor offices, pharmacies, health bars, juice bars and clean environment. But walking in a low income community you will see liquor stores on every corner, fast food restaurants instead of juice bars. You will see police on the corner arresting our blacks and latinos brothers and sisters. Imagine growing up seeing that as a child. You will feel like that's where I belong, that's what I deserve in life and that is not true. Our blacks and latino families and children deserve to be cared for, protected and taught how to build legacies. Our people deserve to feel protected when we see our policemen not afraid and worried if we are going to be stopped because of their appearance. A child living in poverty can affect their emotional , social, educational, and physical development. As an early childhood educator I would want to help our students and families that are in poverty give them a hand. Protect them and guide them for the better. The topic “Impact of poverty of young children and families” helps impact my pedagogy as an educator by helping me understand children and families situations.

Sometimes students and families may behave a certain way because of their personal situations and we as educators have to have an understanding on what's going on so we can be able to help both parties. Parents' personal issues affect the child and can affect their development. That's why it's important to have a professional relationship with the families and child. It is important as educators to reach out to families, treat all students with respect, expose students to places outside of the classroom, build relationships with students and families, teach them social emotional learning strategies and create a positive classroom culture.

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