

WHY IS THE ISSUE OF POVERTY IMPORTANT?



The impact of poverty on our community is pervasive, devastating and accelerating.

POVERTY.....

15.9% of New York State's population live in poverty.

Persistent poverty is often tied to physical isolation, exploitation of resources, limited assets and economic opportunities, and an overall lack of human and social capital.

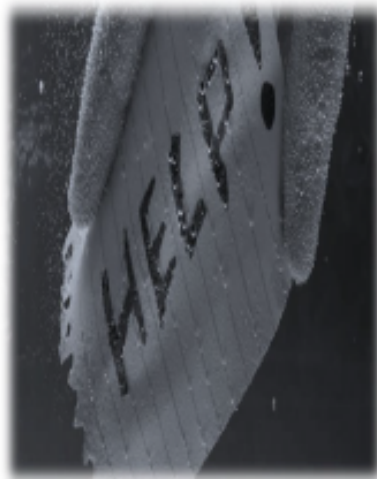
Persistent poverty among children is of particular concern as the cumulative effect of being poor may lead to especially negative outcomes and limited opportunities that carry through to adulthood.

According to 2017 New York State Association of School Business Officials, rural school districts in New York state face a double dilemma in declining enrollment and increasing poverty.

Often, poverty leads to increased emotional and financial stress, increased risk of illness, poor school performance by children, poor productivity by working adults, and ultimately a cycle of struggling that can seem insurmountable.

HOW CAN THE POVERTY SIMULATION MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

The Poverty Simulation can mean different things to different participants. For resource providers, it can help them to better identify with the needs of their consumers. For community leaders, it can help them to create and implement policies and programs that address the issue of poverty with more effectiveness. For participants, it can help to gain empathy and appreciation for the diverse world around them. For everyone, it can inspire a commitment to making a positive difference in their communities.



HOW DOES THE POVERTY SIMULATION WORK?

Immersed in the simulation, participants assume the roles of members of up to 35 different families facing a variety of challenging, but typical circumstances. Some families are comprised of single parents or mixed generation families, and some of the families are same sex couples trying to live off of one income.

In addition, volunteers play the roles of resources to the 'Neighborhood', such as social workers, loan officers, employers, pawnbrokers, grocers, utility collectors, police officers, and teachers.



The simulation is conducted in a large room. Participants are seated in family clusters, and community resources are located at tables around the perimeter of the room. To start the simulation, each family is given a card explaining its unique situation, as well as other items a family would need to get by for one month. Then, the families must take care of business using the various resources during the course of four, 15-minute "weeks."



The activity lasts approximately three hours and includes an introduction and briefing by a facilitator, the simulation exercise itself, and a debriefing in which participants and volunteers share what they have learned about living in poverty.

The simulation leaves a lasting impression on participants and communities. Many individuals reported leaving the experience with an increase in both awareness and empathy and motivated to conduct the work to improve the lives of those they work with and for.



For more information regarding hosting a Poverty Simulation, contact:

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