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The Culture of Poverty: How it Affects Middle School Students

Kaycie Anne Tuttle
Central Washington University

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The Culture of Poverty:
How it Affects Middle School Students

A Project Report
Presented to
The Graduate Faculty
Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education
Master Teacher

by
Kaycie Anne Tuttle
August 2009

ABSTRACT

THE CULTURE OF POVERTY: HOW IT AFFECTS MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

by

Kaycie Anne Tuttle

August, 2009

In education, teachers are seeing more impoverished students than ever before. With that understanding, teachers need to know how to identify and assist these students so that they are successful in school. The War on Poverty has been going on for years, and with a failing economy, teachers are seeing more impoverished students in their classrooms. To counteract this situation, teachers will be shown a pamphlet, power point presentation, and a workshop on poverty which will help show teachers what their students may be experiencing when away from school. In addition, the pamphlet will provide information of what to look for in students that come from impoverished neighborhoods and how to help them succeed in school. These resources will assist teachers in helping their students become more successful in school.

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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND OF PROJECT

In the 1960's, migrant farm workers, unemployed coal miners, white workers trapped in depressed manufacturing, and the socially isolated elderly were impoverished members of American society (Mangum, 2003). Poverty in the 1960's was measured by the Agriculture Department's estimate of how much money a family of any size needed in order to buy nutritious food. It was found that only one third of the money was spent on nutritious food. Many families bought less nutritious food to eat, and with little or no health care, this led to shorter life expectancies (Page & Simmons, 2000). As a society, the American population is still fighting this war.

The struggle against poverty in the United States began with President John F. Kennedy in 1962 when he made the decision to provide aid to the legions of poor through legislation. In his opinion “poverty in the midst of plenty is a paradox that must not go unchallenged” (Reef, 2007, p.191). He enlisted the Council of Economic Advisers to develop a plan (Reef, 2007). After Kennedy's assassination in 1964, Lyndon B. Johnson continued the fight against poverty. Johnson said that he wanted an “all-out war on human poverty and unemployment in the United States” in his State of the Union Address in 1964 (Reef, 2007, p. 191). He also stated “... it is not only to relieve the symptom of poverty, but to cure it, and above all, to prevent it” (Reef, 2007, p. 191).

These concerns initiated the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 by President Johnson. Title One was set in place establishing work study to enable college students from low-income families to help finance their education through the Department of

Health, Education, and Welfare (Reef, 2007). Under this act, the President was to direct and coordinate the mobilization of the "... human and financial resources of the nation to combat poverty in the United States" (Reef, 2007, p. 191). This quickly became known as the war on poverty (Reef, 2007). The country was provided with neighborhood youth corps, Head Start, adult basic education, family planning, community health centers, meal preparation, and economic development (Garson, 2003). The Economic Opportunity Act attempted to alleviate poverty through community action programs in depressed areas, hopefully helping the cycle of poverty to end.

In the same year, The Food Stamp Act passed on August 31, 1964. This allowed qualifying families to purchase food in order to survive. A family of four could purchase \$78 in food stamps for \$44 (Reef, 2007). This act kept many families from starvation, but was not totally effective as many people that really needed help did not know it was available or could not fill out the paperwork. Grocery stores were also against it because they were losing money. The Department of Agriculture did receive a huge boost due to the fact that Americans had to buy healthy food with the food stamps. This program still exists today, helping all poor Americans to be able to purchase nutritious food to maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle (Porto, 2001).

The following year, 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was passed on April 11. It was the first federal law to give financial aid to schools in the amount of one billion dollars in order to improve K-12 schools in low income, depressed rural areas. Following ESEA, the Higher Education Act passed on November 8, 1965 to fund college loans and adult education programs (Reef, 2007). These acts went a long way to begin to alleviate the problems of poor families.

There were over 100,000 impoverished children living in the United States in 1993; which impacted the make up of all schools (Lavelle, 1995). An estimated thirty percent of all homeless persons seeking shelter were children (Lavelle, 1995).

With this alarming number in poverty, students may see schools as a safe place to come. Others may see school as the only constant in their lives while others may not, depending on the family situation. Fifteen years later in 2008, can teachers understand a child coming to school from an impoverished home, and can they make this child feel successful in school?

Statement of the Problem

At Centerville Intermediate School, encompassing grades 5 to 7, student poverty levels were at 42.4% in the 2008 school year which had a direct effect on the teachers in this school as well as the students. Teachers at this school and others in the district saw the direct consequences of students who lived in poverty. As teachers witnessed students in poverty, they became more aware of the symptoms impoverished students brought to the classroom. Teachers in this school saw the direct effects poverty had on students' grades; homework was a challenge to get back, and some students did not have a place to work or had home where it was impossible to get help when needed. One student's behavior could impact a whole class based on what the situation was at the student's home. Many have seen this first hand and from a teacher's standpoint, this topic was very important.

"Children who spend large periods of their childhood in poverty experience adverse long term consequences on their academic achievement, educational attainment, health, criminal justice behavior, and social behaviors far into their adult lives"

(Mangum, 2003, p. 14). In 2008, Goldendale School Districts a school district in North Central Washington the poverty level based on the free and reduced lunch program was at 46.9 %.

“The federal government spends over six billion dollars a year to help provide breakfast, lunch, and milk to more than thirty million children in public and private schools and day care centers” (Page & Simmons, 2000, p. 173). Many of these children are born to non-traditional parents (teens, single parents, physically or mentally disabled, drug abusing mothers). Of those students, many will not have pre-schooling readiness obtained from interaction with materials or resources such as books, educational toys, or computers (Page & Simmons, 2000). For many the rise out of poverty is accomplished by education and job training without which many parents had to live (Page & Simmons, 2000). This is difficult to do because most of the time it is hard to get out of the reoccurring cycle of poverty. In knowing this, it would be helpful to have something to prepare teachers for what to expect.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to help teachers understand the culture of poverty and how it may affect their students in a school atmosphere. A pamphlet will be produced to help the teachers of Centerville Intermediate School find common ground with those students coming in at the poverty level. This information could also help teachers to recognize these students at an earlier stage and to be able to avoid potential problems.

Significance of the Project

The significance of this project is for teachers to be able to recognize and acknowledge the background of their students and to help them handle whatever challenges they may face. Armed with the facts in this pamphlet, teachers will know what to expect and how to avoid the most common errors of having students of poverty in their class. Also, the pamphlet will give strategies on how to deal with situations such as homework, behavior, and social relationships. Research has shown that “children who were raised in poor families are more likely to lack in cognitive development, have lower levels of academic achievement and aspirations, repeat grades, and have conduct problems at school” (Mangum, 2003, p. 14).

Limitation of this Project

This project is not created for high socioeconomic areas. It would best be utilized by teachers who want to know how they may best interact with poor students in a middle school population. The pamphlet is to help identify students who come from poor families. This brochure does generalize the characteristics of students who are poor, but since teachers should get to know each student individually, it can be used on several levels where low socioeconomic students exist.

Definition of Terms

The following are definitions that will help the reader to understand many educational terms used throughout the project.

Chronically Homeless: “Without a home for more than a year; may suffer mental illness or substance abuse” (Pardeck & Rollinson, 2006, p.12).

Culture: "... generally refers to a pattern of human activity and the symbolic structures that give such activities significance and importance" (Socioeconomic Status).

Episodically Homeless: "Frequently experiences periods of homelessness, illness, runaways, spousal abuse" (Pardeck & Rollinson, 2006, p.7).

High Socioeconomic Status: "Have more success in preparing their young children for school because they typically have access to a wide range of resources to promote and support young children's development" (Socioeconomic Status).

Low Socioeconomic Status: "Often lack the financial, social, and educational supports that characterize families. Poor families also may have inadequate or limited access to community resources that promote and support children's development and school readiness" (Socioeconomic Status).

Poverty: "Deprivation of common necessities that determine the quality of life, including food, clothing, shelter and safe drinking water, and may also include the deprivation of opportunities to learn, obtain better employment to escape poverty, and/or to enjoy the respect of fellow citizens" (Payne, 2005, p.1).

Socioeconomic Status: "Based on family income, parental education level, parental occupation, and social status in the community" (Socioeconomic Status).

Temporary Homelessness: "Fire, evictions, family breakdowns, unexpected experience" (Pardeck & Rollinson, 2006, p.7)

Trauma: "... an event outside normal human experience. Trauma generally leaves you feeling powerless, helpless, and paralyzed" (Paradeck & Rollinson, 2006, p.59).

Project Overview

Chapter one describes a brief history of poverty and the actions the United States has taken to lower the poverty level. This chapter also explains what baggage students may be coming to school with. The second chapter describes how poverty exists globally which helps define the local impact it has on Centerville Intermediate School. It explains what teachers can notice if students are affected by poverty and explains how they may live. It also covers how poverty affects all nationalities in both different and similar ways. For the third chapter, after all the research, there will be an interactive workshop for teachers to see the affects of poverty. This will help teachers to recognize the signs and know better how to handle students based on their own observations and help them to have success in school. Chapters four and five describe the research and also include details about the interactive workshop and how this will help teachers help students.

CHAPTER II

CULTURE OF POVERTY

“Too many young Americans go to bed with empty stomachs. They also wake up to seemingly hopeless futures: school problems, unemployment, welfare, gangs, drugs and crime. Children of poverty are more likely to suffer young and violent deaths” (Children in Poverty, 2007, p. 2). According to the U.S. Census Bureau in 1996, 13.8 million Americans lived in poverty; many of these were children from birth to age 18 (Children in Poverty, 2007). There were more children in poverty than in any other age group. Of the 15 million children living in the United States in 1996, one out of four lived below the poverty line (Children in Poverty, 2007). “Everyday 2,660 children are born into poverty and 27 die because of it” (Children of Poverty, 2007, p.1). In the United States, children and families are the fastest growing group in the homeless population numbering 40% of the total population. “Among the 21 most affluent nations, the United States has the highest percentage of poor children. In fact, our rate is twice that of the country next in line” (Children in Poverty, 2007, p. 2).

In 1996, the Welfare Reform Bill cut 60 billion dollars in aid to the poor, putting one million more children into poverty. For children who are born into poverty, many come to school the first year mentally and physically malnourished and unable to keep up in class. Many teachers have seen the effects students who started school in 2001 with very serious problems. Too many of these students will drop out or not finish high school (Children in Poverty, 2007).

In 1998, the poverty line for a family of four was \$16,660 of annual income and for a family of three it was \$13,003. Consequently, in 1998, the United States had 34.5 million people living in poverty (Siddiqi, 2009). The metropolitan areas had 12.3% people in poverty, and central cities were at about 18.5%, with the suburbs at 8.7% in poverty. With these past statistics, poverty has only risen with no sign of ever ending (Siddiqi, 2009).

Within the United States, the dominant perspective has been that poverty is an individual failing. But some argue that poverty in the United States is ultimately the result of structural failing at economic, political, and social levels (Rank, 2003). Most poverty is based on age, race, gender, family structure, and residence. "Those with lower levels of education, less marketable work skills and experience, and having a physical disability that interferes with an individual's ability to participate in the labor market are all highly correlated with and elevate the risk of poverty" (Rank, 2003, p. 6).

"The typical pattern is that households are impoverished for one, two, or three years, and then manage to get above the poverty line. They may stay there for a period of time, only to experience an additional fall into poverty at some later point. It has been calculated that of all the people who had managed to get themselves above the poverty line, over half would return to poverty within five years" (Rank, 2003, p.7). Most of the cases occur because of loss of employment or earnings, or changes in family structure that can put a family back into poverty.

During the past twenty-five years, the American economy has increasingly produced a larger number of low paying jobs, jobs that are part-time, and jobs that are lacking in benefits. In 2001, nearly 7 million Americans were unemployed at some point

during that year, while over 15 million people experienced unemployment during that same year (Rank, 2003). On the other hand, a good portion of unemployment is a result of involuntary reasons, such as layoffs and downsizing directly affecting millions of heads of households. "The labor market simply does not provide enough decent paying jobs for all who need them. As a result, millions of families find themselves struggling below or precariously close to the poverty line" (Rank, 2003, p. 15).

The result of these social policy differences is that they substantially reduce the extent of poverty in Europe and Canada, while U.S. social policy has had only a small impact upon poverty reduction... the national choice in the United States is to provide relatively less generous transfers to low-income families and has meant higher relative poverty rates in the country. While low-income families in the United States work more than in many other countries, they are not able to make up for lower governmental income support relative to their European counterparts (Ranks, 2003, p. 16).

There is a strong probability that an American will experience poverty at some point during his/her adulthood between the ages of 20 and 75. At age twenty, 10.6% of Americans fell below the poverty line. By the age of thirty-five, 31.4 percent experienced poverty (Rank, 2003). "What these numbers indicate is that a clear majority of Americans will at some point experience poverty during their lifetimes" (Rank, 2003, p. 20).

An analogy can be used to illustrate the basic concept. Imagine a game of musical chairs in which there are ten players but only eight chairs. On one hand, individual success or failure in the game depends on the skill and luck of each

player. Those who are less agile or less well placed when the music stops are more likely to lose. These are appropriately cited as the reason a particular individual has lost the game. On the other hand, given that there are only eight chairs available, two players are bound to lose regardless of their characteristics. Even if all the players were suddenly to double their speed and agility, there are still two losers. From this broader context, the characteristics of the individual players are no longer important in terms of understanding that the structure of the game ensures that someone must inevitably lose (Rank, 2003, p.22).

Many would say that this analogy applies to poverty. For every ten American households, there are good jobs and opportunities at any point in time to adequately support roughly eight of those ten. The remaining two households will be locked out of such opportunities, often resulting in poverty or near poverty (Rank, 2003). When the overall poverty rates in the United States do in fact go up or down, they do so primarily as a result of the impact of the structural level that increases or decreases the number of available chairs. Social supports and the social safety net available to families will make a difference in terms of how well such households are able to avoid poverty or near poverty (Rank, 2003).

In the years of 1999 to 2000, there was a decline in the overall poverty rate among children 18 to 24 years old. Also, a decline in poverty of Blacks, Hispanics, and families with female head of households during this time was seen. Despite the decrease in child poverty, people under age 18 continued to have a higher poverty rate than other age groups (Dalkar, 2001). In 2000, the poverty levels by regions were: the Northeast region had 10.3%, the Midwest had 9.5%, the South had 12.5%, and the West had at 11.9%.

The Northeast and the South levels were higher which may have been due to the housing costs in those areas (Dalkar, 2001).

In 2002, fifteen percent of poor children lived in high poverty urban neighborhoods.

Children who grow up poor are more likely to: have impaired cognitive and linguistic development; have poorer health; be less “ready” for school; have lower self esteem and self efficacy; engage in anti-social behavior; experience psychological distress; have lower education attainment; become unemployed; become disabled; and have poorer health as adults (Emerson, 2004 p. 323).

Living in poor neighborhoods in itself will affect the behavioral and emotional outcomes of a child.

Children are exposed to environmental hazards and adverse family circumstances during the sensitive pre-natal and early childhood years may result in long term ill health. These may include environmental toxins, damp housing conditions, impoverished neighborhoods, and homelessness. Additionally, poor parenting, parental separation, under stimulating early childhood experiences, parental work stress and parent unemployment may impact the child’s development (Emerson, 2004). Children raised in these types of places also have a greater risk of a shorter lifespan. The lack of medication, treatment, and money will affect the development of the child in many ways (Emerson, 2004).

... neighborhood poverty has also been linked to slower cognitive development, reduced school readiness, and poorer educational attainment. Neighborhood effects may be mediated through the quality of local childcare and education, and

restrictions of the lifestyle/autonomy of children imposed by parents through their process of accommodating living in “high risk” communities (Emerson, 2004, p. 328)

By living in poor neighborhoods with reduced access to high quality childcare and education, and increased risk of exposure to peer group’s influences may make it hard for children to receive the benefits that children may otherwise receive that do not live in poverty.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau in 2007 there were 37.3 million people living in poverty every day (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). This is not statistically different from 2006 when it was 36.5 million. Knowing this, the Bread for the World Institute put out a rough estimate that 3.5% of Americans experience hunger, skip meals, eat little, or go without food (Siddiqi, 2009).

According to Fellmeth (2007) in 2005, 37% of children in the United States were living in poverty, 42% were infants and toddlers, 58% were African American children, and 62% were Latino children. Poverty across the United States is at an all time high due to the difficult economy and dwindling job prospects.

Statistics of Washington State

In 2004, Washington had a 15.8% poverty rate and was one of the 14 states that had an increased rate from previous years (Rodgers & Payne, 2007, p.3/4). States vary, for example, in the generosity of their cash benefits, the percentage of their poor who receive assistance, time limits, sanctioning policies, quality of support services, and earnings (Rodgers & Payne, 2007). Washington is one of the very generous states in regards to what was mentioned above. States such as Washington pay the highest

benefits and provide higher percentage of their poor with programs that assist them in finding help. There is also evidence that work pays better than welfare. The state has adopted the most effective plans for moving able bodied adults into the work force resulting in fewer poor children (Rodgers & Payne, 2007). Washington State also uses temporary assistance to needy families, which is said to lower the child poverty rates. Regarding what was previously stated, why is Washington one of the states not decreasing children in poverty?

States that have the largest increase in unemployment over time suffered the largest increase in child poverty. The states that score higher on per capita income, taxable resources, and tax revenues while keeping unemployment low had fewer poor children in 2004 (Rodgers & Payne, 2007). The correlation suggests that a healthy economy plays an important role in lowering the rate of poverty among children (Rodgers & Payne, 2007). The states with higher poverty rates are those that have a high single parent ratio, those without high school degrees, and high unemployment. The states that improved their ranking on taxable resources lowered child poverty rates (Rodgers & Payne, 2007).

These findings suggest that reducing child poverty requires lowering the teen birth rate, addressing the issue of male abandonment which leaves children with a single parent, improving child support from absent parents, and improving the education of low-income parents. A healthy state economy is important, creating opportunities, increasing per capita tax revenues, and permitting higher spending on low-income citizens. Because there is less poverty in wealthier states with more viable economies, the findings suggest that poor parents take advantage of

those economic opportunities available to them and suffer less poverty (Rodgers & Payne, 2007, p.15).

In looking at these findings one could see how this may affect schools in any state.

According to the Department of Social Health Services in 2006 in Washington State, 700,000 people were living in poverty. One in five people in Washington, in 2008 were either poor or very close to it (Poverty and Hunger in Washington State, 2008).

Public school districts in high poverty areas have difficulty avoiding sanctions under the federal law of the No Child Left Behind Act (Poverty Rising among Children In State, 2006). The NCLB Act requires all children in the United States to make adequate yearly progress in all subject areas. Schools know the ramifications of failing four consecutive years; this would mean they could face the possibility of the restructuring of the school.

The culture of poverty in students today has a direct effect on the way they will be taught.

According to "Child Facts in 2006," (2008),
...approximately 231,000 of Washington's children under the age of eighteen live below the federal poverty level. It would be possible to completely fill SAFECO Field more than five times with Washington children living in poverty. Two hundred and thirty-one thousand children are more than the combined populations of Yakima, Bellingham and Wenatchee. One in three children in the state are living below the poverty level (p.1).

"The national poverty level for a family of four is \$20,650 per year. The poverty level is set by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and is the same for a family in

Seattle as it is for a family in Wapato” (Child Facts, 2008, p.1). With the cost of living in each of these cities is extremely different, one can wonder how people of poverty in Seattle can survive.

Locally, 14% of the population lived below the poverty line in Douglas County in 2008 (Washington Quick Facts, 2008). Based on the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) report card of Washington State as of October 2007, the total enrollment in schools was 1,026,682 students. Those receiving free or reduced meal prices, as of May 2008, were 37.9% and those who were categorized as special education was 12.7%. Looking just at Goldendale School District, the total enrollment count was 5,490 in October 2008. Free and reduced lunch counts, in May 2008, were 46.9% and the special education classification was 12.5%. At Centerville Intermediate School, the student count in October 2008 was 663. The free and reduced lunch count in May 2008 was 42.4% and the special education student count was 13.8% (OSPI 2009).

Looking at all of these statistics shows that there are many children living in poverty in this state and it is an issue that needs to be addressed. Every day in the classroom many factors stemming from poverty affect students emotionally and physically.

Family Structure

The family structure based on the poverty level can vary.

Nationally, children are much more likely to be poor if they live in single-mother families than if they live in married-couple families. In 2006, 42% of children in the U.S. living in single-mother families were poor, compared with 8% of children living in married-couple families. The same pattern holds true for White,

Black, Hispanic and Asian single-mother families. In contrast, only 12% of Black children and 19% of Hispanic children in married couple families were poor during the same year (Child Facts, 2008 p. 1).

Many of these families end up living in low income housing. Poor families, as of 1993, out weighed the non-poor households. Blacks had a deficit in housing whereas Hispanic houses were usually overcrowded. Many of these families, one out of five, did not have phone service due to their poverty levels (Lavelle, 1995). "Low income children are two times more likely to die from birth defects, three times more likely to die from all causes combined, four times more likely to die in fires, five times more likely to die from infectious diseases and parasites, and six times more likely to die from other diseases than are non poor children" (Lavelle, 1995). Also according to Lavelle (1995), "poor children are about two times more likely to suffer from physical or mental disabilities than non-poor children, five times as likely to be hospitalized for poisoning, and at least three times as likely to receive hospitalization from injures in general" (p.1).

Economic strain from the day-to-day hassles that arise when living with less money than one needs can cause stress. Some additional stressors that can affect children are the exposure to violence, frequent moves and transitions, and exposures to discrimination and other traumatic experiences. Such stress can lead to symptoms of depression, anxiety, hostility, and aggression among poor children and adolescents. Low social economic status (SES) not only has a negative impact on children's mental health, but is also detrimental to their physical health. "Adolescents from low-SES families are also at higher risk for a variety of problematic deviant behaviors such as teenage pregnancy, substance use, legal troubles and arrests, and school failure and dropout"

(Wadsworth, Raviv, Reinhard, Wolff, Santiago, & Einhorn, 2008, p. 159). SES is best computed from parental education, occupational status, and family income.

“Anxiety and depression problems were more heavily associated with poverty related stress for preadolescent girls than the same aged boys, which may suggest that young girls may be especially vulnerable to poverty related stress happening in their home and neighborhood” (Wadsworth, Raviv, Reinhard, Wolff, Santiago, & Einhorn, 2008, p.179). The stress associated with poverty takes a toll on children as young as six years of age. Poor children are especially hit hard due to the fact they are not only subjected to family problems resulting from poverty stress, but their own stress (Wadsworth, Raviv, Reinhard, Wolff, Santiago, Einhorn, 2008).

There are higher poverty rates for families headed by the single parent, families headed by parents without a high school degree, teen mothers and their children, and children out of wedlock (Rodgers & Payne, 2007). The states with the highest rates of divorce, single parenting, poorly educated family heads, out-of-wedlock births, and teen births suffer the highest rates of child poverty (Rodgers & Payne, 2007, p.7)

Students in Poverty

“Poverty is an issue that more and more of our nations’ children are coming face to face with” (Pellino, 2003, p.1). Children living in poverty come from young parents who are single, low educated, unemployed, previously abused or neglected, or living in dangerous neighborhoods. Often children living in these situations grow up to be parents who are the same as their parents. These experiences lead to failure in school because of poor language and reading development. When students lack in these crucial areas of education, they display aggression, violence, social withdrawal, substance abuse,

irregular attendance, depression, incompleting assignments, and a lack of materials for class (Pellino, 2003). Students don't choose where they live or choose to live in poverty, but they are put in those situations by others. Teachers can find ways to help students cope with the issues they are dealing with.

Living in poverty many times comes with facing emotional trauma. A student's emotional climate may be one of stress, or emotional deprivation, which fosters a lack of self-esteem. In response to this, a teacher may see alienation, inadequacy, depression, and anxiety (Pellino, 2003). At times, students in these situations direct their energy into the struggle to survive. They have to live day to day and are unable to manage their emotions. They have poor role models, and many think they have no choice or control over their destiny. Children in poverty start life at a disadvantage with inadequate prenatal care or no health care, and if parents have a job, child care could be a problem (Pellino, 2003). Children of poverty are not usually exposed to cultural activities such as the zoo or museums visits, pre-school, literature, interaction with the educated, or adults that speak well. They are not typically read to and without these opportunities many soon fall behind in school.

"Early childhood education can help at risk preschoolers overcome the disadvantages of being poor and ensure that they enter school ready to learn by providing emotional nurturing and intellectual challenges" (Pellino, 2003, p.3) When students come to school in fear, it means the brain has to overcome the fear otherwise it will downshift into a survival mode. Emotions have an impact on memory which can drive attention, and attention drives learning and memory. Brain based learning research says

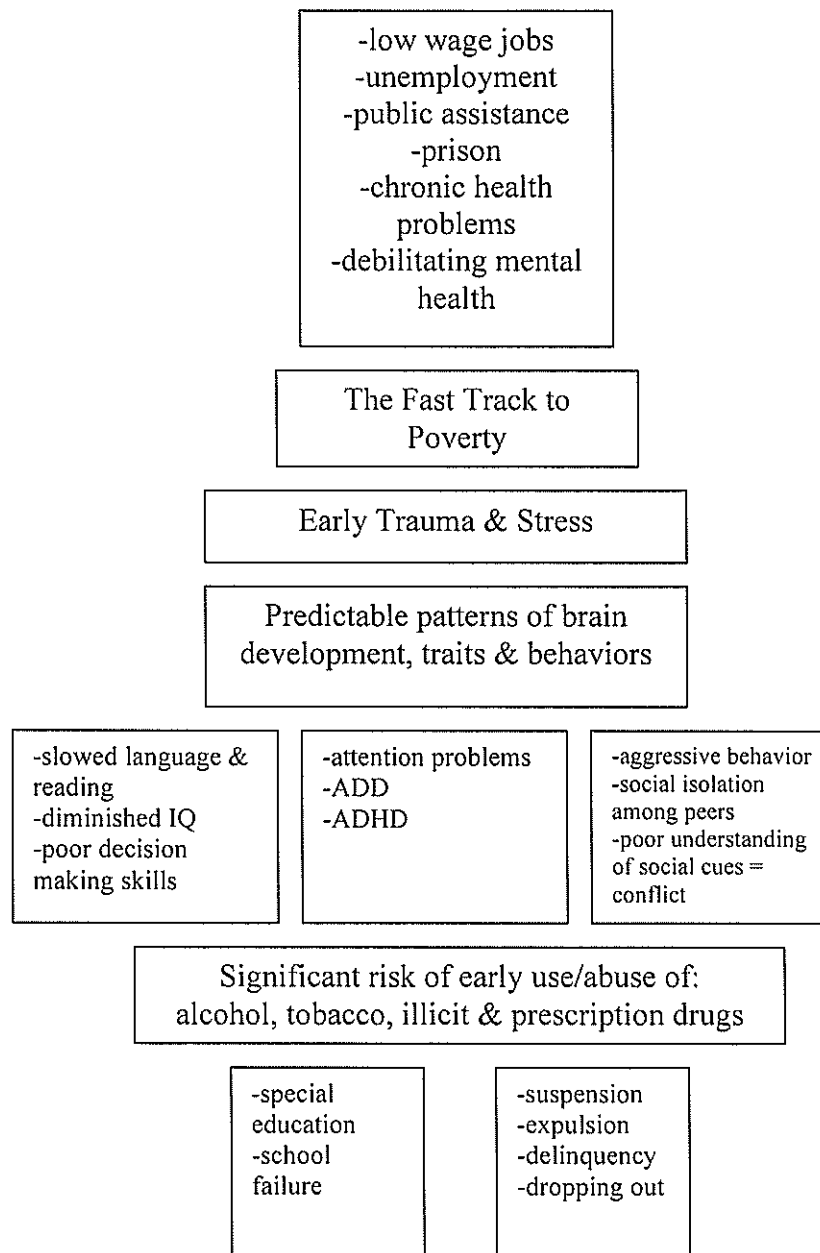
that it will not store short term memory, but it will recreate every time one tries to recall.

Examples are: feeling helpless, low self esteem, and fatigue (Pellino, 2003).

“If children have limited opportunity to learn language, organize perceptions, and develop other higher order cognitive processes, their ability to solve problems and think independently is negatively affected. The foods that children eat or do not eat affect their brain development, functioning and behavior. Chemicals released in response to both stress and from foods can prevent higher order thinking. Children of poverty are exposed to great amounts of stress and their nutrition may be poor. Chronic stress causes the body to deplete nutrients, inhibits the growth of dendrites and limits interconnections among neurons. The results are: no nutrients are available for learning; thinking is slowed, learning is depressed. When protein foods, often lacking in diets of poor children, are digested, tyrosine is released into the bloodstream. Tyrosine becomes L-dopa in the brain and is then converted into dopamine. Dopamine produces a feeling of alertness, attentiveness, quick thinking, motivation and mental energy. Fear of failure, isolation and trauma, usually present in poor children, cause dopamine to be converted into norepinephrine. This causes alertness to be converted into aggression and agitation. Thus, when nutrition is poor, children have difficulty tolerating frustration and stress, become apathetic, and are non-responsive, inactive and irritable (Pellino, 2003, p. 5).

In knowing this information about poverty students, it can and will help a teacher understand why the student is acting out.

The chart below will provides teachers with a direct guide of what to expect from impoverished students. This chart will enable a teacher to recognize a situation earlier and hasten the appropriate response.



Courtesy of the Washington State Family Council (Cole, Gadd, Gregory, Greenwald, Ristuccia, Wallace, 2005).

Multicultural Perspective

“Children make up a much higher share of the poor among Blacks (41.9 % of poor Blacks) and Hispanics (42.6 % of poor Hispanics) than among whites (24.5 % of poor whites)” (Spriggs, 2007, p. 1). Hispanic and Black children have very similar levels of poverty with Black children at 27.2 % and Hispanic children at 33.2 % (Spriggs, 2007). “Yet only 41 % of Black families with children are married, whereas 68 % of Hispanic families with children are married. In 1974, when the poverty rate among Black children was at 39.6 %, 56 % of Black families with children were married” (Spriggs, 2007, p.1).

Asian Americans

Many of the same findings were found for the Asian American poverty level which was at thirteen percent in the United States in 2008. With high rates of poverty, the educational attainment of a bachelor’s degree or higher was around 27.7 % in 2008 (Hune, Takeuchi, 2009). Most Asian students in the state live mainly in the Seattle area. They speak over 100 dialects making the task of teaching these students even harder. The dropout rate for Asians is 8 % and for those from Southeast Asia, 14 % (Hune, Takeuchi, 2009). Many Asian students in schools seem to be the target for racial violence, gangs or bullying, and exhibit depression and suicidal behaviors. Parental pressure can lead to depression or mental health issues in children. With many parents owning small businesses, it is hard for them to find health care for themselves let alone their children (Hune, Takeuchi, 2009).

Native Americans

In 2005, 4.4 million American Indians and Alaskan Native Americans resided in the United States. Six hundred forty-four thousand were enrolled in the United States K-12 system (Alliance, 2008). With 90 % attending public education and 7 % attending the Indian Affairs Program Administered by the U.S. government, makes up the majority of their schooling (Alliance, 2008). Many American Indians and Alaskan teenagers suffer from poverty, suicide, teen birth, and substance abuse. The graduation rate was 50.6 % in the 2005 school year with 45.8 % being male and 52.5 % being female (Alliance, 2008). Most attend schools that have high free and reduced lunch programs.

Poverty & Test Scores

By looking at the results of the 2007 10th grade Washington Assessment of Student Learning, the effect culture had on poverty is clearly exhibited. Most family yearly incomes of Hispanic Americans, African American, and Native Americans range from about \$20,000 to \$23,000 dollars. Asian families make around \$35,000 dollars and whites on average make about \$37,000 dollars (Appendix A, 2007).

This chart shows the results of the 10th grade WASL in 2007. It highlights that those living in poverty have a harder time passing the state mandated test.

10th Grade WASL

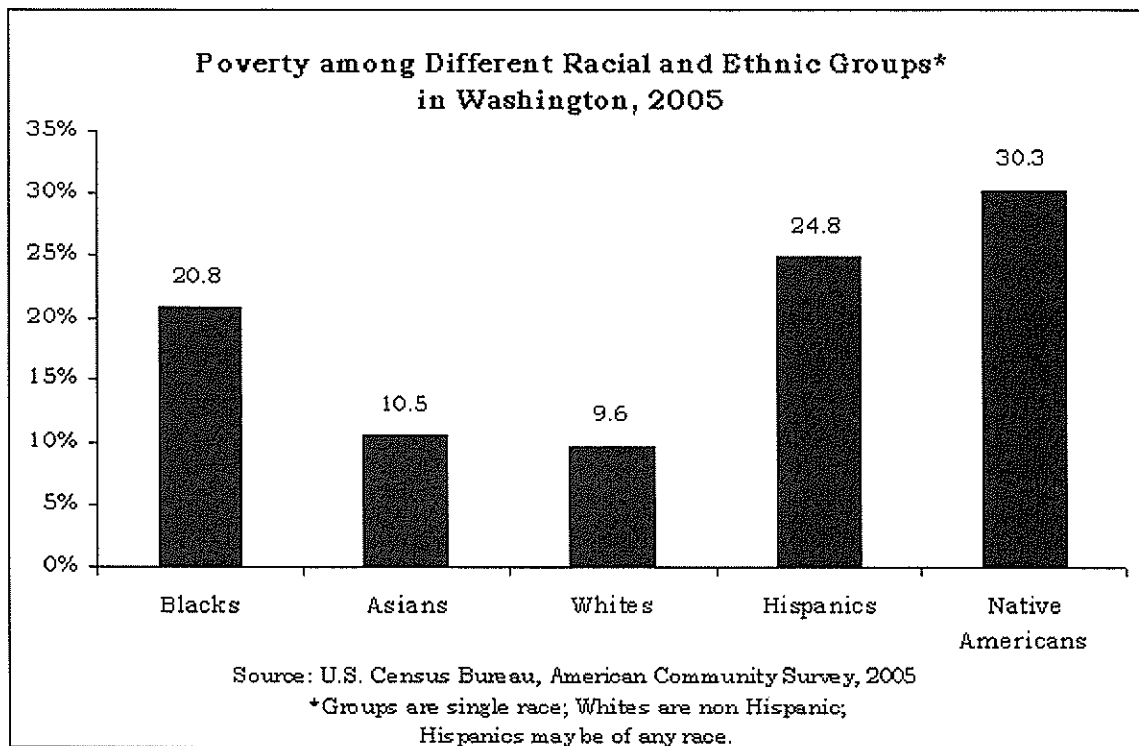
Percentage who met Standard

	Not in Poverty	In Poverty	Overall
Asian	63%	41%	56%
White	58%	33%	53%
American Indian	37%	20%	28%
Hispanic	38%	17%	24%
African American	29%	16%	23%
All Students	56%	28%	48%

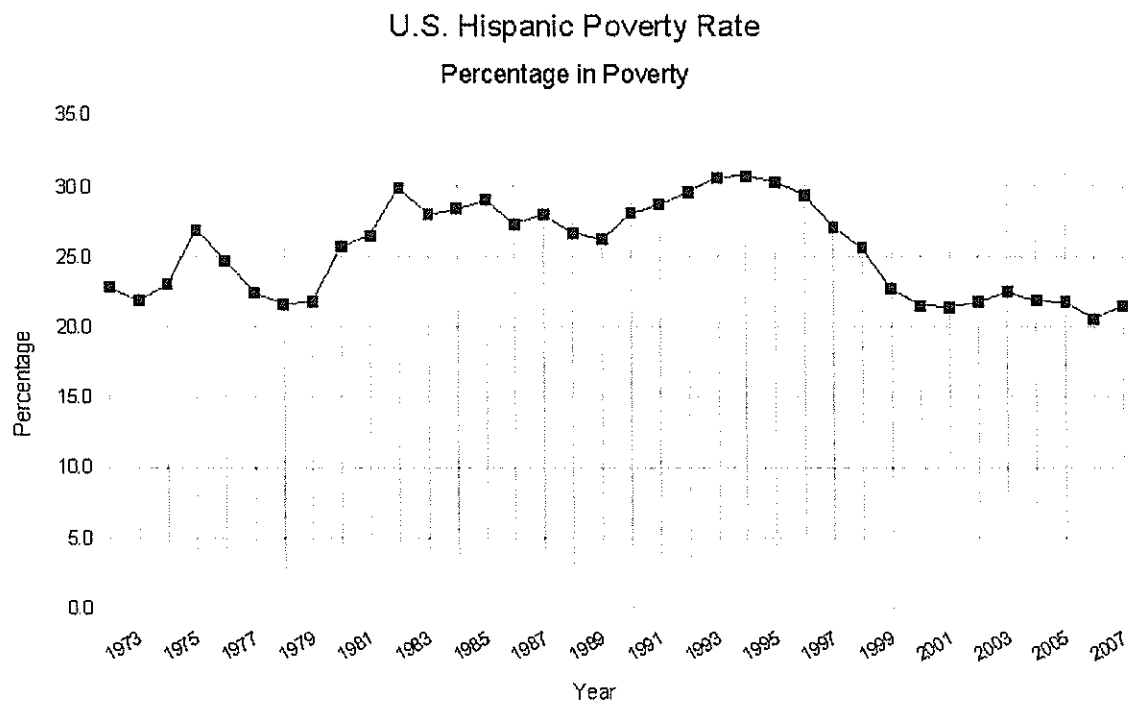
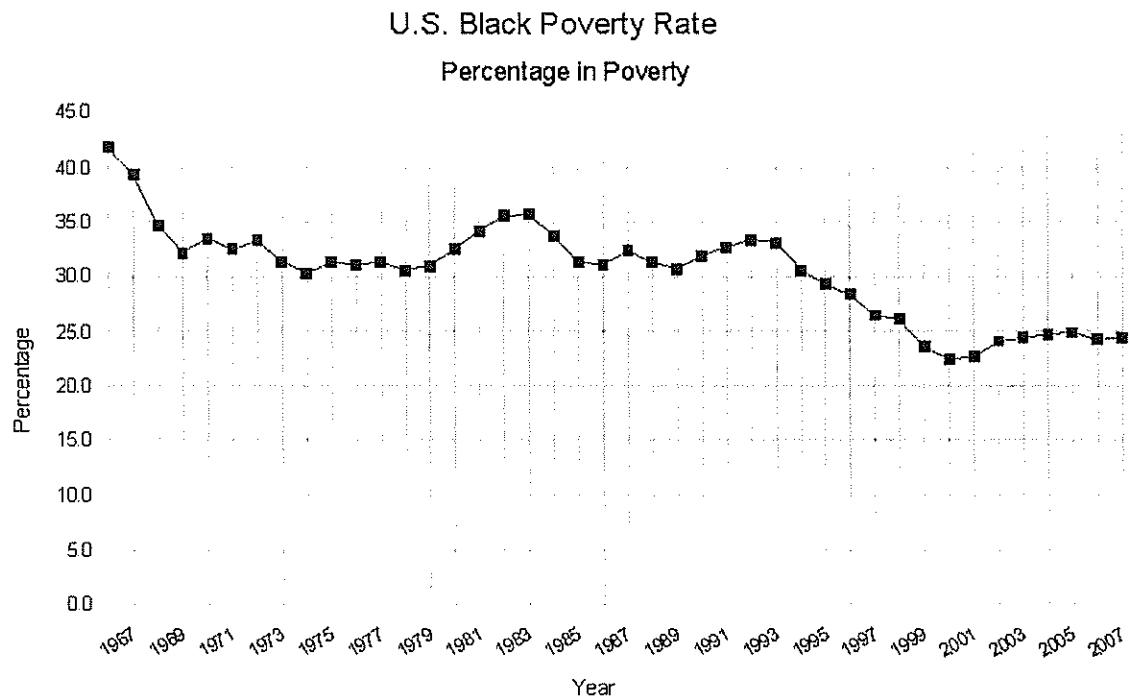
Reference for table is: Washington State Institute for Public Policy (2007)

This table shows the poverty levels in 2005 in just Washington State alone.

Looking at the differences between all racial and ethnic groups, you can see a huge difference between the white citizens and the Native American citizens at this time.



The graphs below show the poverty difference between blacks and Hispanics. In looking at the graphs, one can see the similarities between the two groups. The latest data in 2007 shows that the black poverty level is at 24.5 percent and the Hispanic is at 21.5 percent.



School Problems

Schools have behavior problems all the time, but one precursor could be that a child may be living in poverty. When a student comes to school from poverty, many times they wake up not knowing how they are going to get to school, or who will take them, or if they have clothes to wear, or if there is food to eat. These are things children should not have to worry about, but many students do. Once a teacher learns that a child is coming to them in poverty the opportunity to deal with the situation differently and more quickly is provided.

A student in poverty may have language that is not as fully developed as the other students. One reason for this is there is not formal language spoken in the home; for a student to pick up, they need the opportunity to practice. "The use of formal register on the other hand, allows one to score well on tests and do well in school and higher education" (Payne, 2005, p.28). This type of student does not have the vocabulary, sentence structure, or the syntax to use the formal language. These students know how to use conversational language, but struggle with the academic language proficiency (Echevarria & Graves, 2007). In the academic or ... "formal register of English, the pattern is to get straight to the point. In casual register or conversational language, the pattern is to go around and around and finally get to the point" (Payne, 2005, pg.28). This causes frustration on the teachers' part because they did not get the exact answer. Most text books and assessments are given at the academic language proficiency level which causes poverty students to continue to struggle. Knowing this, a teacher may realize why a student, after a few assignments or tests, has shut down or started acting out to get attention because he struggles in class (Echevarria & Graves, 2007).

One of the biggest difficulties in getting out of poverty is managing money and understanding the general information base around money (Payne, 2005, p.44). Many people living in poverty see money as an expression of personality and it is used in large part for entertainment and relationships, not food or school supplies for the children. When a teacher asks a student in poverty to work on a coloring project at home, it will probably not be completed due to the fact that they did not have those specific materials at home. When an educator gives an assignment, they need to make sure that all students have adequate access to the same resources (Payne, 2005).

Family patterns in poverty look very different than those who live in the middle class. In many middle class families, children usually have a mom and dad even with occasional divorce and remarriage. But those of a poverty family may have a mom or a dad in the picture who may marry someone who has another child; this may occur several times leaving the child not to know what is going to happen next (Payne, 2005). These children have to worry about, "Who am I going stay with after school, who stays with the child when there is trouble or illness, and who is available to deal with school issues? These answers are dependent on the current alliances and relationships at that moment" (Payne, 2005, p.57). Key roles in the family patterns are much different than those in a middle class family. "In poverty the roles, the multiple relationships, the nature of the male identity, the ever-changing allegiances, the favoritism, and the matriarchal structure result in a different pattern" (Payne, 2005, p.57). This is another challenge teachers must try to deal with due to the increasing numbers of impoverished students that make up the main demographic of the population.

Role models are people children can depend on for help and counseling. Many students in poverty do not have a “good” role model. For many children, it is a big deal to have someone to care about them. This sometimes leads to the students finding anyone who will care about them for even a short time, though they eventually leave them to fend for themselves (Payne, 2005). Teachers need to be able to spot this and be there for the students so that they will finish school and be successful.

“In poverty, discipline is about penance and forgiveness, not necessarily change...

Many behaviors that students bring to school are necessary to help them survive outside of the school. Just as students learn to use various rules, depending on the computer game they’re playing, they also need to learn to use certain rules to be successful in school settings and circumstances. If students from poverty don’t know how to fight physically, they are going to be in danger on the streets. But if that is their only method for resolving a problem, then they cannot be successful in school (Payne, 2005, p.77).

Certain types of behaviors at school can lead to many consequences by a teacher, administrator, or the local police. As was mentioned previously, they know the key to succeed in school so they know how far they can go without having a serious consequence (Payne, 2005). If teachers know some of the behaviors that exhibit ineffective ways to solve problems, then they have ample opportunities to establish boundaries within the classroom. This allows the teacher and the student to have common ground on which they can build (Payne, 2005).

For poverty students to succeed in school, they need teachers to be able to recognize what they are dealing with and help them in those particular areas. Whether it

is their language, family structure, the lack of good role models, or how they cope with the idea of surviving, teachers need to approach these situations with open eyes. In doing this, the teachers will definitely be able to help students succeed (Payne, 2005).

Strategies that are Successful for Children of Poverty

With the direct link between achievement and language, a student must become literate in order to succeed in life (Payne, 2005). Some strategies according to Payne (2005) are:

- Have students write in casual register, and then translate into formal register.
- Establish as part of a discipline plan a requirement that students learn how to express their displeasure in formal register and therefore not be reprimanded.
- Use graphic organizers to show patterns of discourse.
- In the classroom, tell stories both ways. Tell the story using formal-register structure, and then tell the story with casual-register structure. Talk about the stories: how they stay the same, and how they're different.
- Encourage participation in the writing and telling of stories.
- Use stories in math, social studies, and science to develop concepts.
- Make up stories with students that can be used to guide behavior (Payne, 2005, p. 34).

Students who live in generational poverty with its lack of structure, organization, and an understanding of what is going on around them, may face challenges at school.

Some of the characteristics that may surface at school show that students:

- are very disorganized, frequently lose papers, don't have signatures.
- bring many reasons why something is missing, or the paper is gone.

- don't do homework.
- are physically aggressive.
- like to entertain.
- only see part of what is on the page.
- only do part of the assignment.
- can't seem to get started (no procedural self-talk).
- cannot monitor their own behavior.
- laugh when they are disciplined.
- decide whether or not they will work in your class, based on whether or not they like you.
- tell stories in the casual-register structure.
- don't know or use middle-class courtesies.
- dislike authority.
- talk back and are extremely participatory (Payne, 2005, p. 60-61).

While at school, students need someone they can trust. With this comes a support system that should and could be used to add structure to a child's day. In supporting students at school one can try:

- Reorganizing the school day and schedule. Often by making minor adjustments, educators can build support systems into the school day without additional cost.
- Creating support systems which include the teaching of procedural self-talk, positive self-talk, planning, goal-setting, coping strategies, appropriate relationships, and options during problem-solving, access to information and know-how, and connections to additional resources (Payne, 2005, p. 75).

Many students living in poverty will come with behavior that may be unfamiliar for the teacher. Much of this was learned from home or how they have adapted to live at home. Students with behavior problems at school must know what is going to happen.

- Students from poverty need to have at least two sets of behaviors from which to choose-one for the street and one for the school and work settings.
- The purpose of discipline should be to promote successful behaviors at school.
- Teaching students to use the adult voice is important for success in and out of school and can become an alternative to physical aggression.
- Structure and choice need to be part of the discipline approach.
- Discipline should be seen and used as a form of instruction (Payne, 2005, p.86).

All data provided by (Payne, 2005).

Strategies that are Not Successful for Children of Poverty

The first step in creating relationships with students is to make deposits to the cause. A deposit is what teachers may do in order to gain trust with the student. A teacher or any other person taking the time to make a deposit will only help the child benefit if they stand by their deposit. To make a relationship work, it goes both ways because the student has to hold up his/her side. The relationship with students is the relationship between each teacher and student, then between each student and each administrator, and finally, among all of the players, including student-to-student relationships (Payne, 2005).

The following table shows how the deposit and withdrawal system works. By having a deposit one will not do the withdrawal unless you are required by law to do so. Such as a student telling a teacher something in confidence and then finding out the

teacher told others this would not help a student gain trust. With this table one can either gain respect or lose respect very easily.

Deposits	Withdrawals
Seek first to understand	Seek first to be understood
Keeping promises	Breaking promises
Kindnesses, courtesies	Unkindness, discourtesies
Clarifying expectations	Violating expectations
Loyalty to the absent	Disloyalty, duplicity
Apologies	Pride, conceit, arrogance
Open to feed-back	Rejecting feedback

Chart provided by (Payne, 2005, p. 111)

Summary

An awareness of the culture of poverty originated in the 1960's when President Kennedy declared the War On Poverty. This put into place what many feel is a never ending war on the cycle of poverty. All over the United States poverty exists to some degree. Even in Washington State, many face the challenge of making it to the following day or even their next meal. Family structure has a huge effect on children who come from poverty. Many students arrive at school poor and teachers are faced with that challenge with little or no guidance. All of these factors make up poverty, and as a student needs guidance and support so that they will not continue in the never ending cycle of poverty.

CHAPTER III

BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

The war on poverty of the 1960's has unfortunately continued into today's generation. Many have seen the devastation at the national, state, and local levels. Schools have also felt the economic pinch. With this, teachers have seen an increase in children of poverty in the educational system.

At Centerville Intermediate School, students come from the two wealthiest elementary schools. The other intermediate school in the district has students from the three remaining elementary schools. Surprisingly, Centerville has the highest student poverty rate based on the free and reduced lunch program (OSPI, 2008). Students that attend Centerville are more likely to come to school impoverished. Teachers then have to prepare for students of poverty with little or no information to help them. A pamphlet including a power point presentation as well as a workshop will help teachers see the beginning signs of poverty and will then enable them to help each student deal with the issues with which they may arrive.

Project Procedure

With the rise of impoverished students at Centerville Intermediate School, there is a need for something substantial to help teachers identify, support, and help these students succeed. The idea was to write a pamphlet and have a workshop to help teachers identify behavior that may occur, assist teachers in how to respond, and then list ways teachers can help these students make it through school successfully.

The first step of this process was to decide on a format that would be easy to read and understand for teachers. Next was to find a way to consolidate all the information so that teachers will not feel overwhelmed by the pamphlet, but feel that they can use it to help students succeed. For this to work, all teachers need to review it and see if it will work for them in the classroom. If teachers can see poverty from the students' point of view, they may look at how they handle these students differently in the future.

Project Development

The development of this pamphlet took quite a bit of research to know exactly what students of poverty go through in their daily lives. All of this knowledge will enable teachers to better recognize students who may be coming to them from impoverished communities before the behavior starts. While working on the pamphlet, there was so much information and research to work with as it took many teachers, counselors, and psychologists to determine what to include in the pamphlet to make it worthwhile. After the input was given, the pamphlet was developed by using their recommendations plus Ruby Payne's (2005) strategies and techniques. The rough draft was created and adjusted to be teacher friendly.

Along with the pamphlet a power point presentation including a workshop will be given to the teachers so they understand how poverty occurs. In doing this, each teacher will have a better understanding of where his/her students are coming from. The workshop will go through what a student may or may not do so that a teacher can identify them. After that, the teacher may find a way to help that student feel successful in a school situation.

With administrative cut backs in the Goldendale School District, teachers hope to eliminate some of their office referrals at the school by using some of the techniques offered in the pamphlet. Seeing students through the years getting punished for something they can not control is hard for teachers to overlook. If teachers know what poverty entails, it may help some teachers to look at discipline in a new way for certain students. Using the pamphlet can only help the teachers accomplish the goal of helping all students succeed.

Project Implementation

This pamphlet will be available to teachers before school starts in the 2009-2010 school year giving them the chance to review it before starting with a new group of students. Along with the pamphlet a workshop will be provided for teachers to see how poverty affects students and the ways in which a teacher can deal with it. It will help teachers to recognize these students earlier in the year, allowing for students to have more success in school.

Teachers will be introduced to the pamphlet and the power point during our teacher in-service days that occur before the 2009-2010 school year. After teachers have had a chance to review the pamphlet and be involved in a workshop, they can then adjust it to fit their own needs. The pamphlet can be used as a resource through out the year to help teachers understand poverty. Poverty exists all over, but without a clear understanding of what it is, many teachers overlook the effect it has on students. With this pamphlet, it is the hope that it will inform teachers of what they may encounter.

CHAPTER IV

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

This pamphlet was designed to help teachers at Centerville Intermediate School. The pamphlet is a resource that teachers can use to identify impoverished students early on in the school year. Along with the interactive workshop a teacher can also see what it would be like to live in poverty and what his/her students will go through on a regular basis. This pamphlet will give insight into what students of poverty may be dealing with and how to accommodate them within the classroom.

The pamphlet starts out with what students may be experiencing when living in poverty and how to identify them. It will then allow the teacher to assess some strategies that may work depending on the students' environments. It will also give some suggestions on how to assist them if they are in the class. With budget cuts within the district, many teachers were sending students with behavior problems to the office. Many of the problems can be related to poverty and using the pamphlet could reduce office visits. The pamphlet ends with resources that could help teachers within their classrooms adjust their teaching to adapt to students who are struggling with poverty. A teacher could also use the pamphlet to access strategies to help all students succeed.

After sharing the rough draft with other teachers, many thought it was crucial in light of today's economy. Many more impoverished students may be coming in this year due to the economical downshift within this area. With all teachers wanting the best for students, they feel the pamphlet will help them succeed in becoming better teachers because they can reach students that they normally would disregard.

Summary

As teachers get to know their students through out the school year, they can watch their behavior patterns, talk to their parents, and see the path in which the student is going and help them along the way. Many students of poverty have their ups and downs and will test the teacher if given a chance. Each student entering a teacher's room for the first time will read the teacher and it only takes a moment to have students see through them. A student is able to manipulate a situation to his/her advantage in a short amount of time. Knowing this, the pamphlet can help those teachers identify the problems sooner than they may if they were not aware of them.

CHAPTER V

Summary

This project was constructed to help teachers see that not all students come from perfect families or perfect neighborhoods. Many students come to school not knowing where their next meal may be coming from, or even where they will be staying that night. When students have these concerns the last thing they want to do is listen to what they need to be doing by a teacher or what they did not do. Within this project it shows the background of poverty and how so many students are in this situation within Centerville Intermediate School. It will also help teachers make a difference by understanding what a student may be going through if they come from an impoverished household.

Conclusions

With all the research and data of impoverished students at the intermediate level there are several conclusions one can pull from the information. As a teacher, one wants to see all children succeed to their full potential and one way toward helping them achieve this is to understand that not all students come prepared or ready to learn. Next is to realize that all students come from different backgrounds and have different learning styles. The final one is to get to know the students. With all this information, a teacher should be able to identify students who may come from an impoverished household.

In knowing that some students may not come prepared or ready to learn, a teacher needs to set expectations that all students can reach so that each one can experience success. Most students that come from impoverished communities already have a mind

set that they are not as capable as other students. With little steps of success, the expectations can grow once they know they can and will be able to achieve it.

All students arrive with a range of backgrounds and as a teacher, one needs to be able to accommodate all of them. A teacher may need to step out of his/her comfort zone to help a student achieve, whether it is with a different style of teaching, dealing with a situation in a new approach, or understanding that not all students are capable of the same expectations.

If a teacher gets to know his/her students, it is easier to know what is going to make them succeed in school. A teacher that knows his/her students should be able to see through their exterior issues to their true potential to help them through their education.

Implications

Within Centerville Intermediate School, the implications will start on the in-service day before school starts. In doing this all teachers will be shown the power point presentation on poverty. This will help show teachers what their students may be experiencing when away from school. Along with the pamphlet and power point, the teachers will gain information of what to look for in students that come from impoverished neighborhoods. This process will help teachers to find ways in which can assist students to become more successful in school.

Recommendations

Some recommendations may come from the teachers after the presentation on poverty. After that, many teachers will try to use the methods and may come up with their own variations or find some that do not work. With these recommendations from teachers, counselors, and administrators the presentation will hopefully change year after

year. With times changing and students changing, teachers also need to change their way of thinking to help all students be able to have the best educational experience at Centerville Intermediate School.

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Appendix 1

The Culture of Poverty: How it Affects Middle School Students

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Behavior Analysis	Handout
Creating Relationships	Handout

Pamphlet

The Culture of Poverty: How it Affects Middle School Students

Poverty

Presented by: Kaycie Tuttle

Background of Poverty

- The struggle with poverty in the United States began with President John F. Kennedy in 1962.
 - He wanted to aid the poor through legislation
 - Kennedy was assassinated in 1964
- Lyndon B. Johnson took over the fight against poverty.
 - In his state of the Union Address in 1964 he said that he wanted an all out war on human poverty and unemployment in the United States.

Conditions of Poverty

- Children are more likely to...
 - have birth defects
 - have physical or mental disabilities
 - be hospitalized
 - have poor childcare
 - poor housing
 - see violence
 - move frequently
 - have traumatic experiences
 - poor language
 - live with a single parent
- Children of Poverty may...
 - have depression
 - have anxiety
 - have hostility
 - have aggression
 - have deviant behavior
 - become pregnant
 - Have substance abuse
 - be arrested
 - school failure
 - irregular attendance
 - incomplete assignments

Poverty in the United States

- In 1996
 - 13.8% million people live in poverty
 - More children in poverty than any other age group
 - 15 million children live in poverty ages
 - Birth to 18 years of age
- In 2005
 - 37 % of children were living in poverty
 - 42 % were infants and toddlers
- In 2007
 - 37.3 % million people living in poverty
 - 42 % were infants and toddlers
 - everyday 2,660 children are born into poverty and 27 die because of it.

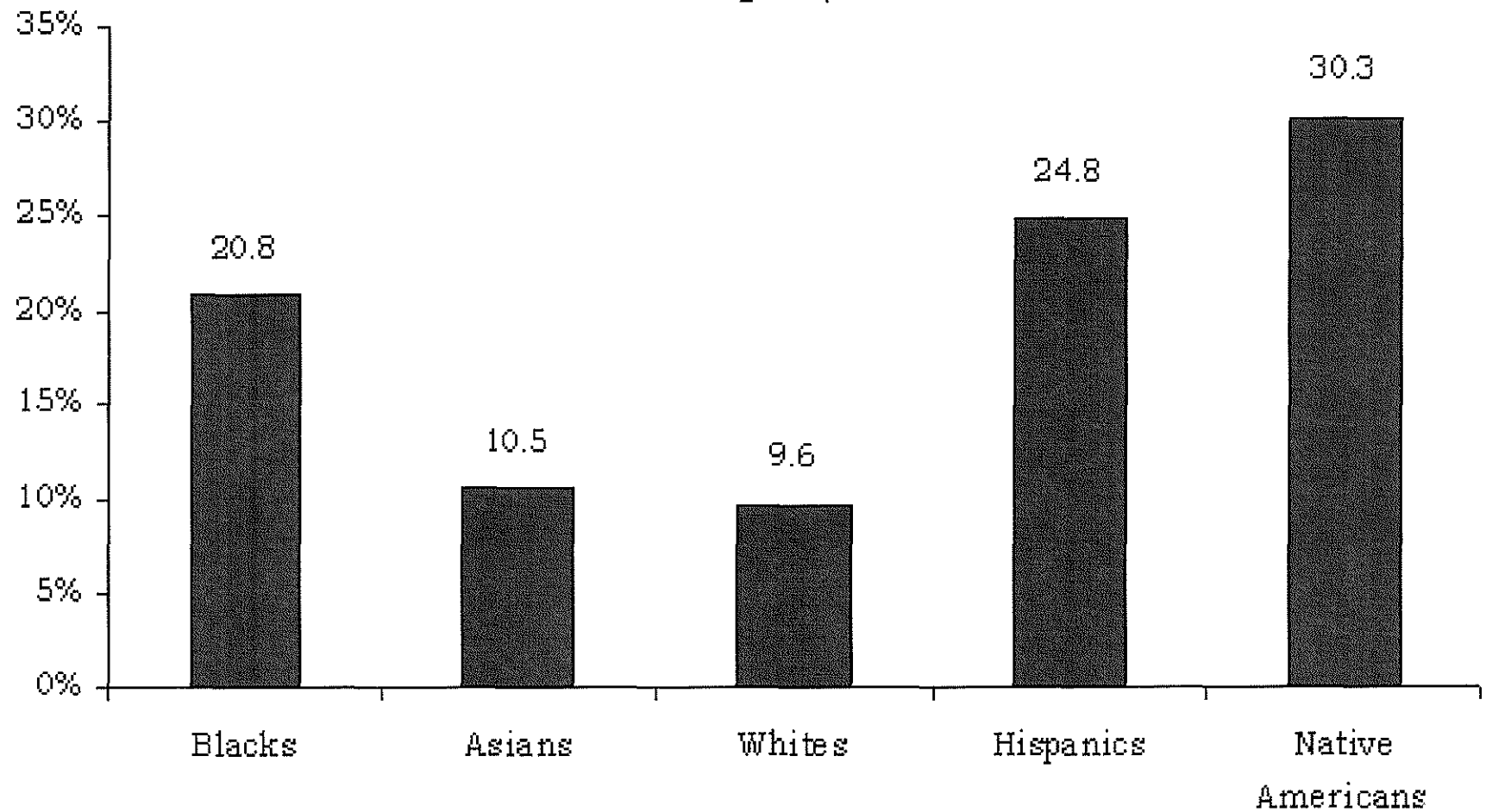
Statistics of Washington State

- In 2004
 - Washington had a 15.8% poverty rate and was one of the 14 states that had an increased rate from previous years.
 - Washington State uses a temporary assistance for needy families, which is said to lower the child poverty rates.
- In 2006
 - 700,000 were living in poverty
- In 2008
 - 1 in 5 were living in poverty or close to it

Washington Poverty Con...

- ...approximately 231,000 of Washington's children under the age of eighteen live below the federal poverty level. It would be possible to completely fill SAFECO Field more than five times with Washington children living in poverty. Two hundred and thirty-one thousand children are more than the combined populations of Yakima, Bellingham and Wenatchee. One in three children in the state are living below the poverty level.
- The national poverty level for a family of four is \$20,650 per year
 - This is set by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
 - The rate is the same for everyone in Washington State
 - So those living in Seattle with a higher cost of living have the same as Wapato

Poverty among Different Racial and Ethnic Groups* in Washington, 2005



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2005

*Groups are single race; Whites are non Hispanic;
Hispanics may be of any race.

Local Poverty

- Douglas County
 - In 2008
 - 14 % lived below the poverty line
- Eastmont School District
 - In 2008
 - 5,490 students enrolled
 - 46.9 % poverty based on the free and reduced lunch program
- Sterling Intermediate School
 - In 2008
 - 663 students enrolled
 - 42.4% poverty based on the free and reduced lunch program

Poverty

Presented by: Kaycie Tuttle

Background of Poverty

- The struggle with poverty in the United States began with President John F. Kennedy in 1962.
 - He wanted to aid the poor through legislation
 - Kennedy was assassinated in 1964
- Lyndon B. Johnson took over the fight against poverty.
 - In his state of the Union Address in 1964 he said that he wanted an all out war on human poverty and unemployment in the United States.

Conditions of Poverty

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| • Children are more likely to... | • Children of Poverty may... |
| – have birth defects | – have depression |
| – have physical or mental disabilities | – have anxiety |
| – be hospitalized | – have hostility |
| – have poor childcare | – have aggression |
| – poor housing | – have deviant behavior |
| – see violence | – become pregnant |
| – move frequently | – Have substance abuse |
| – have traumatic experiences | – be arrested |
| – poor language | – school failure |
| – live with a single parent | – irregular attendance |
| | – incomplete assignments |

Poverty in the United States

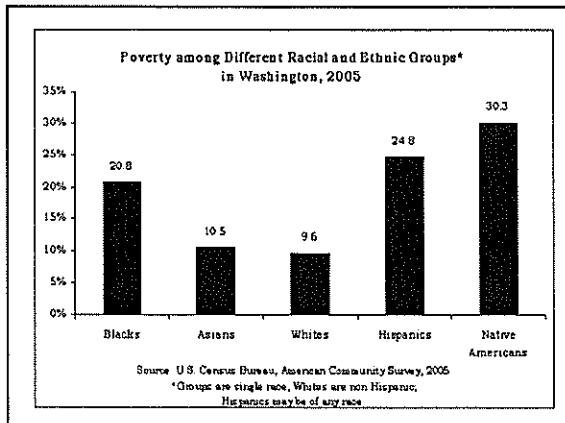
- In 1996
 - 13.8% million people live in poverty
 - More children in poverty than any other age group
 - 15 million children live in poverty ages
 - Birth to 18 years of age
- In 2005
 - 37 % of children were living in poverty
 - 42 % were infants and toddlers
- In 2007
 - 37.3 % million people living in poverty
 - 42 % were infants and toddlers
 - everyday 2,660 children are born into poverty and 27 die because of it.

Statistics of Washington State

- In 2004
 - Washington had a 15.8% poverty rate and was one of the 14 states that had an increased rate from previous years.
 - Washington State uses a temporary assistance for needy families, which is said to lower the child poverty rates.
- In 2006
 - 700,000 were living in poverty
- In 2008
 - 1 in 5 were living in poverty or close to it

Washington Poverty Con...

- ...approximately 231,000 of Washington's children under the age of eighteen live below the federal poverty level. It would be possible to completely fill SAFECO Field more than five times with Washington children living in poverty. Two hundred and thirty-one thousand children are more than the combined populations of Yakima, Bellingham and Wenatchee. One in three children in the state are living below the poverty level.
- The national poverty level for a family of four is \$20,650 per year
 - This is set by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
 - The rate is the same for everyone in Washington State
 - So those living in Seattle with a higher cost of living have the same as Wapato



- ### Local Poverty
- Douglas County
 - In 2008
 - 14 % lived below the poverty line
 - Eastmont School District
 - In 2008
 - 5,490 students enrolled
 - 46.9 % poverty based on the free and reduced lunch program
 - Sterling Intermediate School
 - In 2008
 - 663 students enrolled
 - 42.4% poverty based on the free and reduced lunch program

Please note:

This content has been redacted due to copyright concerns.

Appendix 1: Exercise sheets, after page 3, have been redacted.

Strategies To Use

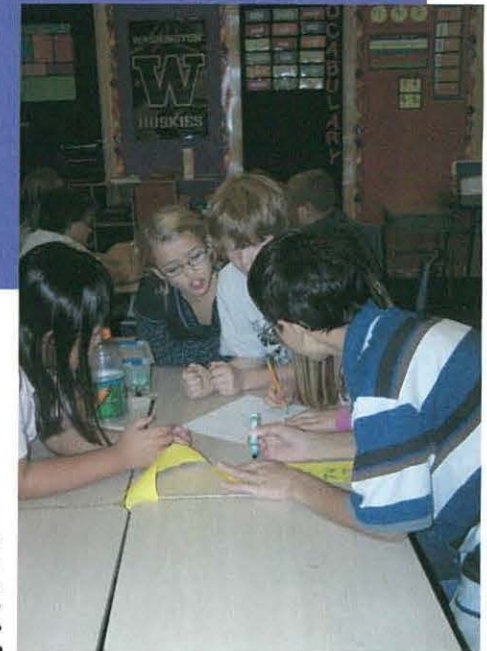
- Have students write in casual register, and then translate into formal register.
- Establish as part of a discipline plan a requirement that students learn how to express their displeasure in formal register and therefore not be reprimanded.
- Use graphic organizers to show patterns of discourse.
- In the classroom, tell stories both ways. Tell the story using formal-register structure, and then tell the story with casual-register structure. Talk about the stories: how they stay the same, and how they're different.
- Encourage participation in the writing and telling of stories.
- Use stories in math, social studies, and science to develop concepts.
- Make up stories with students that can be used to guide behavior

References

- A Framework for Understanding Poverty
By: Ruby K. Payne
- Washington Quick Facts from the U.S Census Bureau.
quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/53000.html
- The Persistence of Poverty in the United States.
By: Mangum, L. G.
- American New War on Poverty
By: Lavelle, R.
- Child Poverty in the United States: The Need for a Constitutional Amendment a Cultural Sea Change.
By: Fellmeth, R.
- What Government Can Do: Dealing with Poverty and Inequality
By: Page, B., Simmons. J.

Strategies by Ruby Payne

Poverty



Identify

- are very disorganized, frequently lose papers, don't have signatures.
- bring many reasons why something is missing, or the paper is gone.
- don't do homework.
- are physically aggressive.
- like to entertain.
- only see part of what is on the page.
- only do part of the assignment.
- can't seem to get started (no procedural self-talk).
- cannot monitor their own behavior.
- laugh when they are disciplined.
- decide whether or not they will work in your class, based on whether or not they like you.
- tell stories in the casual-register structure.
- don't know or use middle-class courtesies.
- dislike authority.
- talk back and are extremely participatory

Assess

- Students from poverty need to have at least two sets of behaviors from which to choose-one for the street and one for the school and work settings.
- The purpose of discipline should be to promote successful behaviors at school.
- Teaching students to use the adult voice is important for success in and out of school and can become an alternative to physical aggression.
- Structure and choice need to be part of the discipline approach.
- Discipline should be seen and used as a form of instruction



- Reorganizing the school day and schedule, and often by making minor adjustments, educators can build support systems into the school day without additional costs.
- Support systems need to include the teaching of procedural self-talk, positive self-talk, planning, goal-setting, coping strategies, appropriate relationships, and options during problem-solving, access to information and know-how, and connections to additional resources.

Assist