The ‘Taboo’ Topic of Poverty

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Activity

- Think of a child/ren that is/are important to you
- Use the bag of materials you were given, NO sharing, no trading, you can only use what you were given.
- Draw or write words that would define SUCCESS for the child/ren you are thinking about, in other words, how will you know they have succeeded?
- You have 5 minutes!
“POVERTY IS THE WORST FORM OF VIOLENCE.”

MAHATMA GANDHI
Key points

- Brain prioritizes survival first
- Stresses like poverty, (without some resiliency factors) can lead to measurable changes and deficits in brain development.
Long term effects of poverty

- Increased risk for:
  - Childhood ADHD
  - Alcohol dependence and drug addition
  - Explosive disorder
  - Major depression
  - PTSD
Opportunities

- Better nutrition → school breakfast and lunches
- After school and summer programs
- Intentional focus on building protective factors
• Schools can disrupt the cycle of poverty
7 practices that are critical to student achievement for those in poverty

- Curriculum & Instruction
- Increase instructional time
- Investment in PD for teachers
- Systems to monitor student performance
- Parental involvement
- Accountability systems
- Use of assessment
8 practices for improvement

- District leadership
- Engage families and communities
- HIGH expectations for poor and culturally diverse students
- Target low-performing students; start with reading
  - Align, monitor and manage curriculum
  - Create a culture of data and assessment
  - Build and sustain instructional capacity
  - Reorganize time, space and transitions
Alter the environment

- Change the school environment
- Reduce the parallels with prison.
- Reduce homework stress by incorporating time for homework in class or right after class.
- Use cooperative structures
- Help students blow off steam by incorporating celebrations, role-plays, and physical activities
- Incorporate kinesthetic arts
Empower students

- Help students increase their perception of control over their environment
- Introducing conflict resolution skills.
- Teaching students how to deal with anger and frustration
- Introducing responsibilities and the value of giving restitution.
- Teaching students to set goals to focus on what they want.
- Role-modeling how to solve real-world problems.
- Giving students a weekly life problem to solve collectively.
- Teaching social skills.
- Introducing stress reduction techniques.
Thanks for coming!

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