The High Cost of Poverty: How Pediatrics Can Ameliorate its Effects on Child Health

NYAAP Annual Conference & Exhibition
Somerset Park, NJ
May 24, 2017
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DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
Benard P. Dreyer, MD, FAAP
Has documented that he has nothing to disclose.

U.S. POVERTY RATES BY AGE GROUP: 1959 TO 2015

% CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY BY RACE ETHNICITY, 1980-2015

**% Poverty Over Time: 1959-2014**

**Seniors Vs. Children**

- 1959: Seniors 35%, Children 27%
- 1969: Seniors 25%, Children 16%
- 1979: Seniors 16%, Children 11%
- 1989: Seniors 11%, Children 9%
- 2015: Seniors 21%, Children 8%

*Seniors (65+)  Children (0-18)*

[Sachs JD. The Price of Civilization. 2011, Random House, NY. Chapter 10, pp. 185-208]*

**US Federal Poverty Level**

**Developed in 1963-64**

Mollie Orshansky
Social Security Administration

100% FPL for Family of 2 adults, 2 children:
$24,600 (2017)$

Based on "economy food plan"

Cheapest of 4 food plans developed by the Dept of Agriculture

"designed for temporary or emergency use when funds are low"

**Poverty is Everywhere**

Suburbs fasting growing area for poverty

*Block et al. Struggling to Get By: The Real Cost Measure in California 2015*
POVERTY IS EVERYWHERE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Patients</th>
<th>Urban Inner City</th>
<th>Urban Non Inner City</th>
<th>Suburban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>52</td>
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CONSEQUENCES OF POVERTY: CHILD HEALTH

- Increased infant mortality
- Low birthweight and subsequent problems
- Chronic diseases such as asthma
- More food insecurity, poorer nutrition & growth
- Poorer access to quality health care and healthy food (transportation, food deserts)
- Increased accidental injury and mortality
- Increased obesity and its complications
- Increased exposure to toxins (i.e., lead) and pollutants

**CONSEQUENCES OF POVERTY: WELL-BEING**

- More toxic stress impacting EBCD
- Poorer educational outcomes:
  - Poor academic achievement
  - Higher rates of HS dropout
- Less positive social and emotional development
- More problem behaviors leading to “TAEs”
  - Early unprotected sex with increased teen pregnancy
  - Drug and alcohol abuse
  - Increased criminal behavior as adolescents and adults
- More likely to be poor adults
  - Low productivity and low earnings
- Especially if deep poverty (<50% FPL), long-term poverty, or poverty in early childhood


**WHY EARLY EXPERIENCES MATTER**

**DRAMATIC GROWTH OF NEURONAL ARCHITECTURE FROM BIRTH TO 2 YRS**

700 new synapses created each second in the early years!!

**Family income, parental education and brain structure in children and adolescents**

Association of Child Poverty, Brain Development, and Academic Achievement
DISPARITIES BEGIN VERY EARLY

30 MILLION WORD GAP

Heckman JJ. Skill formation and the economics of investing in disadvantaged children. Science. 2006;312:1900-1909


Too Many Children Left Behind. Bradbury, Corak, Waldfogel, Walibrock.
And when we talk about children’s problems, we say...

It’s Poverty!!!!

AAP Agenda for Children 2015-2016

Dedicated to the Health of all Children™

AAP.org/Poverty

Messaging and Communications

- Key Messages
  - Poverty is Damaging to Children’s Health
  - Poverty Happens Everywhere
  - Fortunately, we have realistic solutions that we know will work
    - Federal policies work! Without them 1 in 3 children would be poor as opposed to 1 in 5
    - There are also important Federal and state programs that ameliorate the impact of poverty
**Supplemental Poverty Measure: Government Programs Work**

- Using these measures in 2013 reduced % at 100% FPL from 21% to 16.5%
- Major portion of effect due to:
  - EITC: -6.4%
  - SNAP (food stamps): -2.9%
  - Housing Subsidy: -1.4%
  - School Lunch: -1.1%
  - WIC: -0.4%
  - Energy Assistance: -0.1%
  - TANF: -0.4%
  - Work/Child Care Expenses: +1.1%
  - Medical OOP Expenses: +3.5%
  - Taxes and FICA: +2.0%

\[ -13\% \text{ With Medicaid (-1\%)} \]

\[ -14\% \]

**High/Scope Perry Preschool Program: Major Findings at 40**

- 7 to 10% per year rate of return
- Higher than post-World War II stock market (5.8% -- before the 2008 meltdown)
- 7 to 12X Benefit/Cost Ratio

Heckman et al: Rate of return for High/Scope Perry Preschool Program. 2009

**Head Start and Early Head Start**

- Better language age 4
- Higher reading and math scores age 12
- $5.70 saved for each dollar of

MIECHV reaches only 2.5% of poor children under 3 years: 75,000 of 3 million

**Home Visiting: Nurse Family Partnership**
**Interventions in Pediatric Primary Care**

Reach Out and Read

Advance in Language (months) in 2-5 yr-olds

P <0.05

- Improved child cognitive, language, and social-emotional development
- Reduced delay, with 50% reduction in need for EI

ROR Reaches 4 million children per year: ¼ of all poor children! Interactions, vocalizations


**Recommendations for Pediatricians**

- Screen for risk factors within social determinants of health during patient visits
  - Questions about basic needs such as food, housing, heat, child care, making ends meet
  - Refer to community resources
  - We know SNAP, EITC, etc. improve child health and academic success
- Implement integrated medical home programs such as:
  - Reach Out and Read
  - Video Interaction Project
  - Healthy Steps
  - Incredible Years and Triple P (behavioral management)
- Collaborate with community organizations to help families address unmet needs and assist with stressors


**Recommendations for Advocacy**

- Invest in young children
- Support/expand essential benefits programs
  - Medicaid/CHIP, SNAP, WIC, school meals
- Support/expand strategies that promote employment and increase parental income
  - EITC, minimum wage, paid parental leave
- Improve communities: affordable housing
- Support integrated models in the medical home that promote parenting and school readiness
- Fully fund home visiting

The Children’s Uninsured Rate has declined to a historic low.

Medicaid and CHIP cover nearly 40% of US children, 2015.

Public Coverage for Children.

Block Grants/Per Capita Caps Shift Costs to States.
Hope is Not a Strategy

AAP 4 Part Strategy
1) Engaging chapters
2) Building coalitions
3) Mobilizing members
4) Speaking out for child health

We Can Afford These Changes

NAS Study Funded at $750,000

"It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men."

Frederick Douglass
American Abolitionist
1818-1895

Thank You!