A DIALOGUE ABOUT POVERTY IN AMERICA

September 28, 2021

countyhealthrankings.org
YOUR FACILITATORS TODAY

- Ericka Burroughs-Girardi
  Senior Outreach Specialist
  CHR&R

- Thomas (Tommy) Jaime
  Communications Specialist
  CHR&R

- Joanne Lee
  Collaborative Learning Director
  Healthy Places by Design

TODAY’S GUESTS

- Christine Muganda
  Data & Analytics Team Leader
  CHR&R

- David Riemer
  Senior Fellow
  Community Advocates Public Policy Institute

The views of the speakers outside of County Health Rankings & Roadmaps are their own.
QUESTIONS WE WILL ANSWER

How  Do we identify those living in poverty in our community?

Why  Is addressing poverty critical for communities?

What  Are some federal and local solutions to poverty?

SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES WITH

DATA  EVIDENCE

GUIDANCE  STORIES
JOIN US FOR MORE DISCUSSION – TODAY!

- **When:** Immediately following the webinar
- **What:** Interactive learning experience, opportunity to share ideas and ask questions
- **How:** Videoconference and/or phone via Zoom
- **Why:** Deepen the webinar learning, allow further exploration

**Children in Poverty:** percent of people under age 18 living in poverty.
2021 Federal Poverty Guidelines

**Family of 4:** $26,500

**Family of 2:** $17,420

**EXAMPLE:** 1 adult and 3 children
Household income: $24k

**EXAMPLE:** 1 adult and 1 child
Household income: $18k

Children in poverty is a measure of both current and future health.
Experiences are built into our bodies

Percent of Children in Poverty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All children in the county</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black children in the county</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Average</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Even in the healthiest counties, nearly 1 in 10 children are living in poverty.
“The John Snow Question”

When Will Doctors and Public Health Experts Make a Priority of Advocating Policies—Outside the Health System—That Will Dramatically Reduce Unemployment and Poverty, and Thus, Will Greatly Improve Population Health?

More Job Seekers Than Openings ... Most Years

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics
In 2019, 19 percent of jobs paid below-poverty wages — that is, their hourly pay was too low to lift a family of four with a full-time, year-round worker above the official poverty line ($26,172 in 2019, equivalent to $12.58 an hour).

In the U.S., poverty:
- Is mostly due to the labor market’s two greatest shortcomings
  - Chronic job shortage
  - Too many low-wage jobs
- Is exacerbated by low minimum benefits for adults with disabilities and retirees on Social Security

“...
Poverty Affects All of Us

Consequences for the Poor

- Reduced purchasing power
- Malnutrition
  - Individuals cannot afford sufficient healthy food.
- Homelessness
  - Poverty is a leading cause of evictions and foreclosures.
- Exposure to heat or cold
  - Individuals cannot pay for heat or AC, leading to utility cut-offs.
- Chronic Stress
  - Stress causes “dysregulation” of the immune system, resulting in a wide range of health problems and premature death.

Consequences for Society

- We lose people we love
- Employers/economy lose productive workers
- Tax base loses revenue
  - Schools, libraries, and other institutions supported by taxes are shortchanged...and/or
  - Taxes are needlessly raised
- Overall health care costs rise
  - Since poor cannot pay, the rest of us pick up the extra cost
  - Our disposable income shrinks, curtailing what we would otherwise spend, save, or invest.

Reducing Poverty in the United States

What It Takes To Dramatically Reduce Poverty:

A Comprehensive, Work-Based, “Policy Package”
A Policy Package to Reduce Poverty 50% +

(1) Useful, wage-paying, subsidized jobs
(2) Much higher minimum wage...$10, $12, $15/hour
(3) Bigger Earned Income Tax Credit & Child Tax Credit
   -- EITC expanded for “childless” adults
   -- CTC extended to almost all children, raised, paid monthly
(4) Higher minimum benefit for disabled and retired
(5) Other supports, e.g., free or affordable childcare

Does Reducing Poverty Improve Health?

“By reducing poverty and increasing income for working families, EITC has been linked to positive health outcomes, particularly for infants and mothers.5, 7-9 Studies show greater health improvements happen when larger, more generous EITC benefits are available.7, 10-1”

The John Snow Question(s)
“Being convinced that water from the Broad Street pump was at fault, Dr. Snow spoke on September 7 to the Board of Guardians, the political group responsible for maintain [sic] the safety and welfare of the area. They listened to his concerns, noted his findings, and on September 8 authorized the removal of the pump handle.”

SoC BULLETIN Vol 34 No 2, 2001, P. 4

The John Snow Question(s)

First: Which public policy reforms entirely outside the current health care system—indeed, outside the current public health system—would have the greatest impact on improving population health?

Second: If a “policy package” of reforms entirely outside the health system—involving a dramatic reduction in unemployment and poverty—will in fact do the most to improve population health, isn’t it the obligation of doctors and public health experts to make the pursuit of those specific anti-poverty reforms their top priority?
Third: Today’s doctors and health experts should dedicate themselves to persuading the federal government to enact the optimal anti-poverty policy package—the one that does the most, at an acceptable cost, to greatly improve U.S. population health outcomes.
Even in the healthiest counties, nearly 1 in 10 children are living in poverty.

TAKING ACTION LOCALLY AGAINST POVERTY

- Living wage laws
- Transitional jobs
- Paid sick leave
- Debt advice for tenants struggling to pay rent
- Legal support for tenants facing eviction

Strategies pulled from What Works for Health using keyword “poverty”
WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!
Click the link to answer a few questions about today’s webinar
JOIN US FOR OUR UPCOMING WEBINAR!

Does Civic Health Participation Influence Health

October 16, 2021

Register at countyhealthrankings.org/webinars

Dawn Hunter
Director,
Southeastern Region of
the Network for Public
Health Law

Kim Irwin
Executive Director,
Health by Design
Administrator, Indiana
Public Health Association

...& MUCH MORE ON THE CHR&R WEBSITE

• Facebook.com/CountyHealthRankings
• Follow @CHR Rankings
• Sign up for our newsletter CountyHealthRankings.org/subscribe
JOIN US FOR MORE DISCUSSION – TODAY!

- **When:** Immediately following the webinar
- **What:** Interactive learning experience, opportunity to share ideas and ask questions
- **How:** Videoconference and/or phone via Zoom
- **Why:** Deepen the webinar learning, allow further exploration

**Post-Webinar Discussion Group**

Visit us at [www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org)