

Jenna Dixon

Poverty

During the “Hard Times Generation: Families Living in Cars” and the “Poor Kids” video, what stood out to me was the number of families that are homeless and how much it is rising. It was good seeing how positive the children were about their situation, and as the one girl said “it’s just life,” but it was still so sad to see these children grow up at such a young age and go through such difficult things. It was also inspiring in the “Poor Kids” video how an overlying theme was that all the kids wanted to escape poverty so that they could do better for their future families. Seeing the parent’s perspectives was also very hard, because it was apparent how much it broke their hearts to put their children through being homeless, but it just showed how much they loved them and that they would do anything to provide and keep their families safe.

Both Poverty Simulations were difficult because it got down to deciding between choices like taking care of your health or buying groceries. I did not realize how quickly the money would run out and it especially got hard when factoring in the children. I imagine this is the struggle that all parents face, because you want to give your child their best opportunity to thrive, and things like getting a math tutor or allowing them to join the gifted class would help, but there is not enough money. I started to feel guilty while going through the simulation because it was so hard to choose the right thing to do. I cannot imagine the stress of having to decide what to spend money on and what to skip and the worry that comes with wondering if you made the right choice.

The “Brain Hero” video was very informational because I did not know how much the development of the brain can be affected by traumatic events. This makes me so sad because these children are just born in bad situations, due to no fault of their own, and not only are they affected

mentally, emotionally, and physically, their brain development is also affected, which would make it harder for them to get out of poverty or other bad situations, and instead the cycle may just continue.

What stood out to me in the “TED Talk” video about adverse childhood experiences was how much more likely people that have experienced adverse childhood experiences were to have health complications later in life. It was even more powerful when she mentioned that these people do not even have to engage in events that damage your health, like alcohol or drugs, for their health to be altered. I had never realized how much childhood trauma can affect your body and your overall health. The quote “adverse childhood experiences are the single greatest unaddressed public health threat facing our nation today” really stuck with me because it needs to be addressed and fixed, and that change can start now.

Overall, I think that all these videos and activities have shown me how difficult and different lives these children and families are living and the struggles that are faced every day. I hope to take this realization into my nursing practice by being able to apply and consider ACE scores into care so that I can give the care that is needed to help these families, and to realize that there is so much more going on with them. I also hope to never be judgmental in my nursing practice because I do not know what is going on behind the scenes. I think that many people blame the parents and wonder why they are not providing enough for their families, but as the videos showed some of the families are doing all that they can to keep their family surviving. I hope to never take on this mindset and to provide the best care regardless of circumstances. I also want to always remember that if a parent is coming to the doctor then it is serious, because as I learned during the simulations, it is so hard to figure out how to manage their money when it is so tight. In conclusion, I hope to always be kind, nonjudgmental, and strive to provide my best nursing care possible, while at the same time taking into consideration all the factors that can affect a child’s or adult’s health.