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Poverty Simulation

When I started out by watching the PBS video on poverty for children in the US my heart was broken. I know that when I was younger, I had been in some pretty tough situations, so to kind of relive those feelings and experiences and remember that it's still happening for families out there was hard for me. As a kid, growing up in poverty-stricken homes is tough in so many ways but I think the toughest thing about it is how fast you have to adjust and grow up. As a child living in poverty, you're not really able to just live care-free and happy how a kid should. You worry about things such as your parents happiness/defeat, the bills, how you can help provide extra income, and how best to put on a brave face and not appear affected by your situations. This is shown so clearly in the videos that we were given to watch. One of the hardest things to deal with while growing up in poverty as a child is the social aspect. Other kids have no idea what you're dealing with at home and they mock you, and tease you, and they really decrease your feeling of self-worth. One of the hardest things for me to watch in the videos was how strong the kids were showing themselves to be, but from personal experience I knew just how hard they were fighting inside to keep it all together and keep up with the front. You have to believe that everything will work out because you have no other choice; you have to believe in the hope for a better future because if you don't you won't know how to continue on. These videos, and these exercises truly reminded me of everything that I am working for right now and why I am fighting so hard to be successful in school. They also reminded me of the harsh reality that this is still continuing in our country. The fact that so many children are going through this makes me want to just seek those in need and figure out in what ways that I can help them. It was extremely profound to me to hear about all of the research and experiences that Dr. Burke presented in her TED talk. It also made me wonder how the healthcare community isn't jumping on this information when it seems so obvious and beneficial. It

makes a lot of sense to me that the adverse childhood experiences had by children would affect them in such a big way. I love knowing that there is research, and even methods already being implemented in some places, that will help us better screen and treat these children in terms of prevention of further health damage. As a nurse I will be reminded that so many children out there are living like this, and it is part of my job during the time that I care for them to make sure that any need that they have is met. I should use these opportunities to be an advocate for these children, to make sure that they are utilizing every resource available to their families. The poverty simulations showed me the difficult decisions that these families have to make when it comes to how they spend their money. A lot of times, in these decisions, it is the children who are having to make a lot of sacrifices. A lot of their developmental, social, mental needs are put on the backburner and that truly puts them at great risk for depression and isolation and anger towards the world. It is very hard for these children to feel motivated or act on the fact that there is a true possibility that they can come out of this poverty situation as they grow up. There is a true need in figuring out ways that we can help these children so that they will not develop any setbacks in their lives. These poverty situations greatly contribute to the number of ACEs these children will experience. Due to the fact that parents may stress about their situation they may be stressed and take it out on the children, or the fact that the children may have to be left with different people can lead to abuse. I truly understood the risk these children are at.

I will continue to use these lessons as I go on in my nursing career, especially if I choose to be in the pediatric field. I would love to research more and learn the screening tools and treatments that Dr. Burke has come up with and been using. I would love to figure out ways that I could do my best to be the best advocate for my patients. I feel that by doing this I will be looking more at the bigger picture of what is going on with the child beyond their most pressing concerns and on to what they are dealing with spiritually and mentally. I want to be able to view my patient holistically and recognize the risk that they are at that would have affects on their health in multiple areas.