

Meritt McGehee

3-13-2021

Poverty Simulation reflection

The PBS video "Poor Kids" shows three separate families in poverty over five years. It's important to realize how much being in poverty affects children. They are worrying about things kids shouldn't even have to think about. A young boy said the only way out was football, but his family couldn't afford to get him the equipment. One of the boys dropped out of school, and he felt like the school didn't even care about him. Another girl got bullied because she was poor. They have such complicated home lives. We don't know what our patients go through out of the hospital. That's why it's important to ask questions and listen to the things they say to get them the help they need.

In the video "Hard Times Generation: Families living in cars," it truly broke my heart when they said that bus routes changed to pick children up in cheap motels since that's where so many families were having to live due to the construction industry collapsing. There are families also living in their car & you can see the amount of stress and worry it puts on the children no matter their age. They were eating canned goods straight out of the can since they had no place to warm the food up. There is no way these children are able to get adequate nutrition or rest due to their living conditions. These families are under an immense amount of stress; they are scared because they know if people find out their children are sleeping in a car, they are at risk of getting their children taken from them.

The video "Brain Hero" discusses how adversity at the beginning of a child's life can disrupt brain development. What happens early in childhood can affect the rest of life due to

higher stress levels and decreased learning opportunities. It also can affect their health, for example, increases the risk of diabetes and heart disease. It is so important that a child is in a healthy and reduced stress environment in the early years of their life in order to have healthy brain development.

The TED talk "How childhood trauma affects health across a lifetime" discusses how much being abused, neglected, or even living with a parent with a drug addiction can affect your entire life. She talked about how children were being referred to her for a diagnosis of ADHD, but she would look into a complete history and physical. She couldn't diagnose them with ADHD, but she found out they had experienced extreme physical, emotional, sexual abuse, and trauma. The higher your ACE score, the worse your health outcomes. 12x the risk of suicide if your ACE score is four or more. It also increases the risk of you developing heart disease, cancer, or respiratory problems. Their fight-or-flight response is activated so often it affects the developing immune and hormone systems, so they are at an increased risk for later in life health problems. Home visits, nutrition, education, care coordination, mental healthcare are all resources that can be used to help educate and help these children with high ACE scores. I love that she said that when we as a nation recognize that this is a public health crisis, we can begin to use the right resources to come up with solutions for ACEs and toxic stress.

What I took from all these videos and exercises is that It is essential to be there for your patient that exceeds their hospital stay. We are our patients' advocates. We need to talk to them and make sure their home life is okay. If we feel like they live in poverty, we need to make sure we do our part and set them up with resources to improve their living situation. Patient care is more than helping treat their illness. To be a patient advocate and have a servant's

heart, it's important to take the time to listen and ask questions and go above and beyond to help your patients not just in the hospital but upon returning home as well.