

Poverty is everywhere and occurring in more and more in families in the United States. The United States has a significant amount of children living in poverty or living in homelessness. I learned many different things from the documentary about families living in poverty. Poverty affects a child in many ways because it can lead to malnourishment, poor hygiene practices, and a lack of education. For instance, one of the families shown in the documentary was about a family in which the father had lost his job. This affected the family because they no longer had the financial resources to acquire food and other necessary items needed for survival. Their daughter was able to get food from the nutrition club at school which provided low income families bags of food that were to last them throughout the weekend. A different family who experienced poverty due to their father also losing his job slept in their vehicle in front of the hospital. The father would guard the vehicle all night to protect his family. They were able to utilize the bathrooms in the hospital to do things such as use the bathroom and brush their teeth. Although they did have a car, the father was not getting proper rest to potentially find a new job. This is just another example of how poverty can negatively affect the health and wellbeing of families and children. Lastly, a different instance of poverty affecting the future of Americans was the young man who dropped out of high school. This is a big concern because poverty will continue to repeat itself over and over if you cannot escape it. Education is the way out for individuals living in poverty. As a future nurse, I have come to the realization that there are thousands of families living in poverty in every community and city in the nation. This will affect how I care for patients because some families might not have the resources and means to properly care for and nourish their bodies whereas some will. This is why screening tools and questionnaires are crucial so we can see how much access patients have to opportunities that will improve their health. An example of this would be a family who has a child with asthma and came to the emergency room because he was having an exacerbation. The child was able to be treated in the hospital however how do we know this will not happen again? Questions should be asked to these families about what resources they have to care for their asthmatic child such as

transportation to pick up a prescription for an inhaler at their nearest pharmacy or current jobs the parents might have where they lose a day of pay if they miss work to take their child to a follow up appointment. Insurance is also an important factor because families in poverty might not have insurance available to pick up prescriptions and help cover costs for medical care therefore influencing them to stay home instead of seek our care due to the fear of costs. All of these factors come into play when caring for a patient who is living in poverty because we want to provide them with the best resources and education for them to further thrive rather than have to suffer due to a medical condition because they are living in poverty.

From what I learned about childhood trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) from Nadine Burke Harris is that trauma such as physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, or growing up in a broken family home can greatly affect your future health. It is a common problem that is everywhere among the United States and can be prevented and treated. Adverse childhood experiences can cause a multitude of problems in children as they grow and develop into adolescents and adults. Not only can it lead to physical health problems such as an increase in the risk for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or diabetes but can also increase your risk of mental health disparities such as anxiety and depression. Exposure to these adverse experiences as a child can cause significant damage to the brain which leads to impacted decision making and a higher likelihood of engaging in risky behavior as an adult. These factors are very important because childhood is when the brain is growing and developing drastically. The damage occurred to different areas of the brain can cause neurological deficits that are preventable with screening techniques like a thorough history and physical. As we all know, adversity is something everyone faces throughout their lifetime but as an adult, we are able to face these challenges and process them better than children. If we can prevent these adverse childhood experiences, we can improve the health and quality of life of children who are facing these issues. Dr. Robert Block referred to ACEs as the, "single greatest unaddressed public health threat" our nation is facing today. As a future

nurse, it is important to ask questions and identify potential problems in children's lives that could lead to high risk behaviors later on.