

Section 1

Poverty and the Brain

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You will see scenery images.

Help those around you.

Over 14 million Americans are unemployed.

Now, imagine you are one of them.

Your savings are gone.

You lost your house.

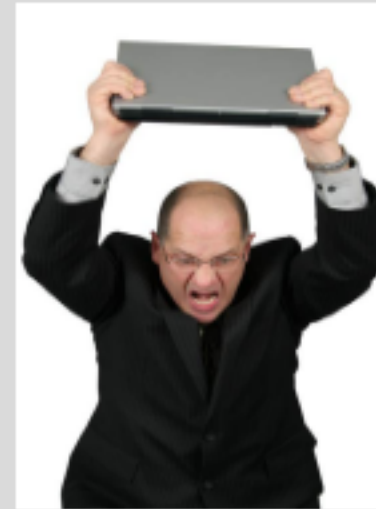
You're down to your last \$1,000.

You ran out of gas.

You have 2 kids.

Can you make it through the month?

Can you make it through the month?



Poverty Defined

- **Poverty**- persons with income less than that deemed sufficient to purchase basic needs--food, shelter, clothing; Varies depending on geography

Poverty in classroom = risk factors that affect mind, body, soul



Types of Poverty

- **Situational Poverty**= sudden crisis
- **Generational Poverty**= 2 generations born into poverty and can't get out
- **Absolute Poverty**= (rare in US) scarcity of shelter, running water, food; focus day-to-day survival
- **Relative Poverty**=income insufficient for "society" norms
- **Urban Poverty**= overpopulated, more violence higher crime rates, less playground safety; households are crowded, noisy, physically deteriorated
- **Rural Poverty**= less access to services, support for disabilities, quality of education, less job opportunities

Poverty in classroom = risk factors that affect mind, body, soul



Trivia Question

TRUE OR FALSE

Children and adolescents who skip breakfast do so to help their parents out.



Trivia Question

TRUE or FALSE

Children and adolescents experiencing hunger have lower math scores and poorer grades.



NURTURING



**THE WHOLE
CHILD**

Facts: Whole Child

Healthy (emotionally and physically)

- BIC everyday
- Cafeteria menu has changed; healthier options

Safe

- Safe at school; higher academic achievement; know how to resolve conflict; support to strengthen emotional and social skills

Engaged

- Learning styles; hands-on curriculum that integrates arts and PE

Supported

- Caring student-teacher relationships; high expectations

Challenged

- Higher level thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills and also “street-smart”



Facts: Whole Child

- **Healthy**
- **Safe**
- **Engaged**
- **Supported**
- **Challenged**



Home + Poverty

- Parent hectic work schedules; feelings of being unloved, unhappy life events
- Lack a caring, dependable adult in life
- Left at home to fend for themselves and siblings
- Less time playing outside, more time watching TV
- Fewer books at home, visit library less
- Major predictor of teenage depression



Effect; 6 or more risks per poor family: divorce, sickness, eviction, head injury, domestic violence, early death

Home + Poverty

6 or more risks per poor family:

divorce
sickness
eviction
head injury
domestic violence
early death



School + Poverty

- Acting out behaviors
- Impatience and impulsivity
- Gaps in politeness and social graces
- A more limited range of behavioral responses
- Inappropriate emotional responses
- Less empathy for others' misfortune



School + Poverty

- Acting out behaviors
- Inappropriate emotional responses



Trivia Question

TRUE OR FALSE

Children report that eating breakfast at school will cause their parents to lose their job.



Trivia Question

TRUE or FALSE

A child's brain is hardwired (skills that do not have to be taught) with:

Sadness,
Joy,
Disgust,
Anger,
Surprise, and
Fear



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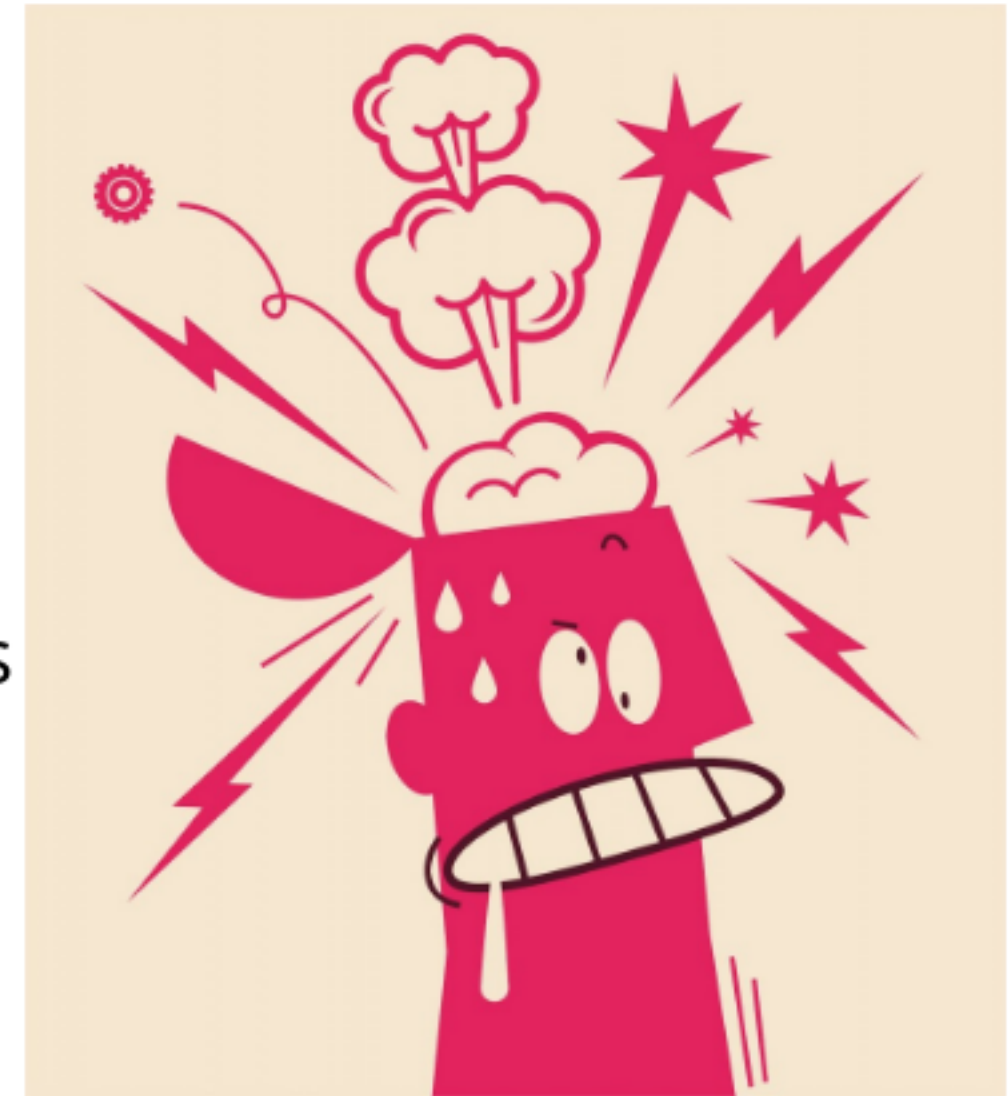
Facts: STEM

- Future: require STEM education
- Worldwide needs more STEM-skilled workers
- 49% parents vote STEM top educational priority
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
- Hardwired: sadness, joy, disgust, anger, surprise, fear
- Emotional Brain
 - Taught: humility, forgiveness, empathy, optimism, compassion, sympathy, patience, shame, cooperation, gratitude



Home + Poverty

- Lack of computers
- Lack problem solving skills
- Unable to handle stressful situations
- Increased anxiety
- Increased sense of detachment and helplessness
- Underdeveloped language



Home + Poverty

Lack of computers and problem solving skills



School + Poverty

- Chronic tardiness
- Lack of motivation
- Use profanity
- Disrespect each other
- Gaps in politeness and social graces
- Poor short-term memory



School + Poverty

- Lack of motivation
- Poor short-term memory
- **Learned helplessness:** wait for teacher to tell them what to do/how to react



Trivia Question

TRUE OR FALSE

Students' math and reading abilities will improve if the teacher gives the answers so students can just copy.



Trivia Question

TRUE or FALSE?

Poverty does not effect a childs IQ.

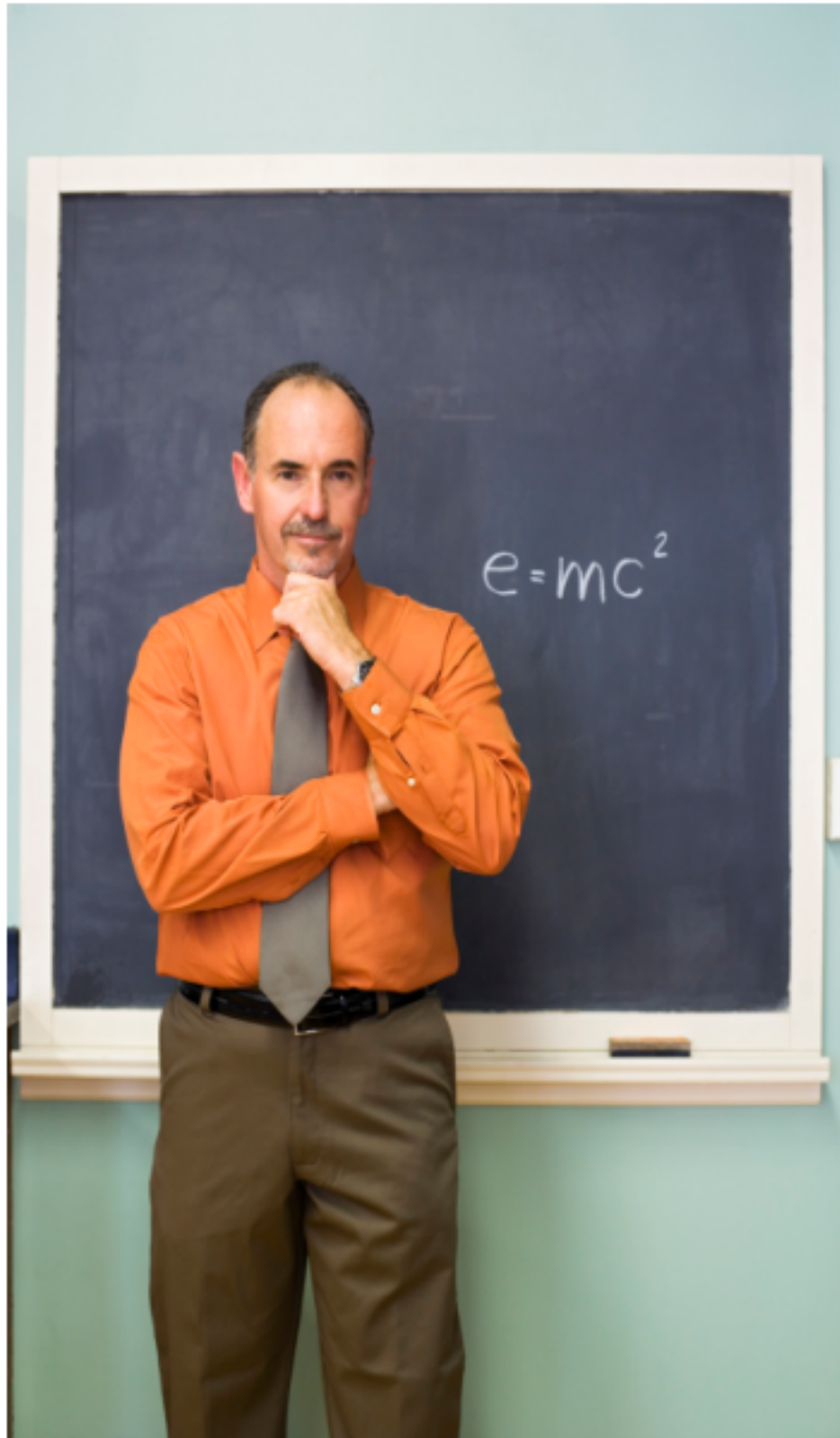


NEW MINDSET



NEW RESULTS





Mr. Hawkins Beliefs



Mindset - Teacher Beliefs

- High expectations
- Learn from experience
- Good / bad students
- Based on intelligence
- Power of "yet"
- "I can" statements
- Stay positive
- Mistakes are part of learning process
- Teachers have to do them correctly
- Parent and Teacher collaboration / trainings



Fixed Mindset: Intelligence is static

- Leads to a tendency to:
 - avoid challenges
 - give up easily
 - see effort as fruitless or worse
 - ignore useful negative feedback
 - feel threatened by the success of others



Fixed Mindset

Intelligence is static.



Growth Mindset: Intelligence can be developed

- Leads to a desire to:
 - embrace challenges
 - persist in the face of setbacks
 - see effort as the path to mastery
 - learn from criticism
 - find lessons and inspiration in the success of others



Growth Mindset

Intelligence can be developed.



Trivia question

TRUE or FALSE?

Providing students with breakfast in the classroom is associated with higher tardy rates and more disciplinary office referrals?



Trivia question

TRUE OR FALSE

Eating breakfast causes students to become obese.
Obesity leads to lower IQ and growth mindset.



Today's Classroom Expectations



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Teaching today with poverty in mind

Whole child

- Teach them stronger social and emotional skills; results in less “attitude”
- Teach them how to deal with anger and frustration; introduce conflict resolution skills
- Teach how to set goals to focus on what they want
- Pack acknowledgments and celebrations into every single class
- Social skills: Hopefulness and self-esteem skills
- Avoid demeaning sarcasm
- Keep voice calm and avoid labeling actions; say “please” and “thank you” → never demand what you want
- Discipline through positive relationships; show that you care more than you show authority or knowledge
- Students will bond with others when they feel safe, appreciated, important, supported → bloom academically



Teaching today with poverty in mind

Whole child

- Pack acknowledgments and celebrations into every single class
- Avoid demeaning sarcasm
- Keep voice calm and avoid labeling actions
- Say “please” and “thank you” → never demand what you want
- Discipline through positive relationships; show that you care more than you show authority or knowledge



Please &
THANK YOU

Teaching today with poverty in mind

STEM

- Skills needed to succeed:
 - Attention and focus skills
 - Short- and long-term memory skills
 - Sequencing and processing skills
 - Problem-solving skills
 - Perseverance and ability to apply skills in the long term
- Improve coping skills by providing problem-solving sessions
 - Problem solving
 - Critical thinking
 - Leadership
 - Collaboration skill
- Offer choice and solicit input



Teaching today with poverty in mind

STEM

Provide opportunities for:

- Problem solving
- Critical thinking
- Leadership
- Collaboration

Offer choice and solicit input.



Teaching today with poverty in mind

Mindset

- Improve awareness among staff about health-related issues
- Support:
 - Team teaching
 - Staff PD
 - Personnel changes
 - Shared school management



Teaching today with poverty in mind

Mindset

- Loop with students: improved reading and math performance, emotional stability and improved conflict resolution and teamwork, stronger bonds (St+T = improvement in reading/vocab ability), higher attendance rates
- Send weekly notes home to parents
- Avoid complaining about students' deficits, instead teach it so they become proficient
- Be persistent and work hard



In Conclusion

- Students who come from poverty start school at a disadvantage
- They come to school with inappropriate behaviors and attitudes

As teachers, we should:

- Provide students with opportunities to feel healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged
- Encourage and praise them
- Teach our children empathy





**What are you willing to commit to
in order to teach a child in poverty?**



Resources

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Questions?



Questions?

