Bridges Out of Poverty

A presentation for OhioMHAS Learning Community Training
Generally speaking, we can define “poverty as the extent to which a person, institution, or community does without resources.”
WORKSHOP GOALS

• To increase your understanding of our customer base

• Define poverty

• Understand the relationship between poverty and the OhioMHAS mission

• Identify strategies to apply the Bridges concepts when developing, funding, and monitoring OhioMHAS community initiatives
“But we’ve always done it that way…”
AGENDA

• What is Bridges Out of Poverty?
• Poverty and OhioMHAS mission
• Define Poverty
• Poverty in Ohio
• Access to Resources
• Mental Models
• Hidden Rules
• Developing Strategies
WHAT IS BRIDGES OUT OF POVERTY
Bridges out of Poverty is a framework for understanding economic class

- People and organizations use Bridges to develop program and strategies that:
  - Improve relationships at an individual level
  - Improve outcomes at an organizational level
  - Change systems at a community level
There is a clear connection between mental health and poverty
Poverty and Mental Health

• In 2005 to 2010, the prevalence of depression among adults age 45-64 was five times as high for those below poverty level.

• According to a CDC study, suicide rates in the US tend to raise during recessions.

• Lack of money is the #1 reason why adults in America do not receive proper mental health services.

http://www.bestmswprograms.com/mental-health/
Lack of money → No treatment → Mental health deteriorates → Lack of work → Lack of money

Source: BestMSWPrograms.com
The mission of OhioMHAS is to provide statewide leadership of a high-quality mental health and addiction prevention, treatment and recovery system that is effective and valued by all Ohioans.
Access to service
Adherence/compliance
Effectiveness
Fragmented systems

Effective services for consumers, better access
Organizations achieving outcomes
Coordinated services

Bridges Out of Poverty
An inclusive framework of thinking about people from various economic backgrounds and its application to improve services
WHAT IS POVERTY
We can define “poverty as the extent to which a person, institution, or community does without resources.”
Aside from abject poverty, there are two kinds.
Situational Poverty

• Situational poverty is a shorter time, for 5 years or less, and is caused by a change in circumstance (i.e. death, illness, divorce, etc.)

Source: Bridges Out of Poverty

Generational Poverty

• Generational poverty is defined as being in poverty for two generations or longer.
Tammy Story:

Discuss the type of poverty Tammy and her family face.

What kind of barriers do you think Tammy and her boys encounter? Why?
60 Minutes story:

Discuss the type of poverty people in this clip face.

What kind of barriers do you think they encounter? Why?
# 2015 Poverty Guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persons in Family/Household</th>
<th>Poverty Guideline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$11,770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$15,930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$20,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$24,250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the 48 Contiguous states and the District of Columbia  
Source: US Department of Health and Human Services
This map shows the 2009-2013 American Community Survey estimates of the number and percentage of persons in poverty by county.
Poor and Near-Poor Persons in Ohio:
The Ratio of Income to Poverty Level
for 11,230,706 Persons, 2009-13

Source: U.S. Census Bureau
Percentage of Persons for Whom Poverty Status Was Determined That Were in Poverty, Ohio and the U.S.: 1959-2013

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Notes: * - CPS; ^ - decennial census, hyphenated - ACS
“Poverty is more than the choices of the poor.”

Source: Bridges Out of Poverty
Key Points to Consider About Poverty

1. This workshop focuses on economic environments.

2. **Poverty (economic class) is relative.**

3. Economic class is a continuous line, not a clear-cut distinction.

4. Generational poverty and situational poverty are different.
5. This work is based on patterns. All patterns have exceptions.

6. An individual brings with him or her the hidden rules of the class in which he or she was raised.

7. Schools and businesses operate from middle class norms and use hidden rules of the middle class.

8. In order to build relationships of mutual respect between economic classes, we need to be aware of more than one set of hidden rules.
9. The more we understand about how class affect us and a open about how it affect others, the more effective we can be.

10. In order to achieve, one may have to give up relationships (at least for some time).
UNDERSTANDING ACCESS TO RESOURCES
In no state can a minimum wage worker afford a **ONE-BEDROOM** rental unit at Fair Market Rent, working a standard 40-hour work week, without paying more than 30% of their income.

**Hours needed at minimum wage to afford a one-bedroom unit**
- 60 hours per week or less
- Between 61-79 hours per week
- 80 hours per week or more

*This state’s minimum wage exceeds the federal minimum wage*
There is a fundamental mismatch between the wages people earn and the price of decent housing.

Wages Needed to Afford Rent Across the U.S.

In 2015, the 2-bedroom national housing wage is $19.35 an hour to afford a modest, two-bedroom apartment without spending more than 30% of income on rent. This wage varies from state to state.
People in poverty are problem solvers.

People in poverty are very resourceful.

Source: Bridges Out of Poverty
FINANCIAL
Being able to purchase the goods and services of that class and sustain it.

EMOTIONAL
Being able to choose and control emotional responses, particularly to negative situations, without engaging in self-destructive behavior. Shows itself through choices.

MENTAL (Cognition and Learning)
Having the mental abilities and acquired skills (reading, writing, computing) to deal with daily life.

SPIRITUAL (Belief)
Believing in (divine) purpose and guidance.

Found on page 49 in the Bridges Out of Poverty Workbook
PHYSICAL
Having physical health and mobility.

SUPPORT SYSTEMS (Bonding Social Capital)
Having friends, family, and backup resources available to access in times of need. These are external resources.

RELATIONSHIPS/ROLE MODELS (Bridging Capital)
Having frequent access to adult(s) who are appropriate, nurturing, and who do not engage in destructive behavior.

KNOWLEDGE OF HIDDEN RULES
Knowing the unspoken cues and habits of a group.

Source: Bridges Out of Poverty
Social capital are the connections, social networks, and norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness.

Social Capital

- Neighbors and Family
- Clubs
- Religious Organization
- Formal Organization
- School
- Work

Bonding Capital
Bridging Capital

On page 52 in the Bridges Out of Poverty Workbook
Understanding Mental Models
A Mental Model is an internal picture of how the world works.
Mental model of WEALTH

Connections
Private clubs & associations
Board of Directors
National & International Advisers
Lawyers & Accountants
Charitable activities
Travel
Media & political linkages
Oversight of corporate property, personnel concerns
Event sponsorship, attendance
Keeping up Vacation
Growing divide between rich and super rich
We expect people in poverty to make “good choices” but the worst choices are available.
On page 5 in the Bridges Out of Poverty Workbook

- Pawn shop
- Liquor store
- Corner store
- Rent-to-own
- Laundromat
- Fast food
- Check cashing
- Temp services
- Used car lots
- Dollar store
Tyranny of the Moment

1. First, there is an unplanned event.
2. It can become an unrelenting and unending crisis.
3. The crisis forces people in poverty into the tyranny of the moment. This is where the future is lost.

Source: Bridges Out of Poverty
When the future is lost, people get stuck solving the same problems over and over, and where proactive planning is difficult to do. “The need to act overwhelms any willingness people have to learn.”

Source: Bridges Out of Poverty
We all experience the tyranny of the moment but our access to resources determines our ability to recover from it.

Source: Bridges Out of Poverty
The more we understand how economic class affects us and are open to hear how it affects others, the more effective we can be.

Source: Bridges Out of Poverty
Understanding

HIDDEN RULES
Hidden rules are the unspoken cues and habits of a group.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Poverty</strong></th>
<th><strong>Middle Class</strong></th>
<th><strong>Wealth</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Driving Forces</strong></td>
<td>Survival, Relationships, entertainment</td>
<td>Work, achievement, material security</td>
<td>Financial, political, social connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time</strong></td>
<td>Present most important Decisions are made based on feelings or survival</td>
<td>Future most important Decisions made based on future ramifications</td>
<td>Traditions and history most important Decisions made based on tradition/decorum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Power</strong></td>
<td>Power linked to personal respect Ability to fight Can’t stop bad things from happening</td>
<td>Power/respect separated Responds to position Power in information and institutions</td>
<td>Power in expertise and connections Power in stability Power in policy and direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Money</strong></td>
<td>To be used, spent</td>
<td>To be managed</td>
<td>To be conserved, invested</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
POVERTY
» Casual register
» Language is about survival

MIDDLE CLASS
» Formal register
» Language is about negotiation

WEALTH
» Formal register
» Language is about networking

Source: Bridges Out of Poverty
In other words, language can be a barrier when people from different economic classes try to communicate.
# REGISTERS OF LANGUAGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGISTER</th>
<th>EXPLANATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FROZEN</td>
<td>Language that is always the same. For example: Lord’s Prayer, wedding vows, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORMAL</td>
<td>The standard sentence syntax and word choice of work and school. Has complete sentences and specific word choices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSULTATIVE</td>
<td>Formal register when used in conversation. Discourse pattern not quite as direct as formal register.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASUAL</td>
<td>Language between friends and is characterized by a 400- to 800-word vocabulary. Word choice general and not specific. Conversation dependent upon nonverbal assists. Sentence syntax often incomplete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTIMATE</td>
<td>Language between lovers or twins. Language of sexual harassment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Formal Register Pattern

A → B

Casual Register Pattern

B

A

Bridges Out of Poverty Workbook
Identifying Strategies
DISCUSSION:

Discuss the ways your organizations can use the Bridges framework and mental models to work with people in poverty.

Chose two areas of the systemic approach in the next slide.

Write them down on a sheet of paper.
Collaboration

• The intentional creation of a continuum or wraparound services between agencies
• Sharing information (with customers’ approval), staff and facilities.
• Referrals and partnerships are NOT collaboration
No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship.

–Dr. James Comer
Bridging the gap requires a commitment from the individual.