

MEDICAID EQUITY SIMULATION

Families Living In Poverty Additional Facts

1. Since the 1960's, the US government has calculated an official poverty threshold based upon the cost of food. An estimate of the cost to feed a family for one year is multiplied by three to obtain the number, which is adjusted for inflation each year.
2. Percentages of this poverty threshold, often called the Federal Poverty Level, are used to calculate eligibility for government benefits, such as Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). For example, households with incomes at 138% of the Federal Poverty Level could qualify for health insurance through Medicaid.
3. The Federal Poverty Level for a family of four in 2019 was \$25,750.
4. Child poverty comes with an additional cost to society - one study estimated the economic cost of child poverty at \$500 billion due to decreased productivity and increased cost of healthcare and criminal activity.
5. Poverty is increasingly difficult to overcome. Children living in poverty tend to remain poor and live in neighborhoods with few opportunities, while wealthy children continue to be wealthy as adults.
6. It is impossible to know how many of the families for which you provide care struggle with basic necessities unless you routinely screen for needs, by asking about whether they have enough food or if they are struggling to find affordable housing or child care.
7. Screening may be as simple as asking, "Do you have difficulty making ends meet at the end of the month?" This question has been associated with a sensitivity level of 98% to uncover the need to link families to community resources.
8. Parents of children living in poverty may only be receiving about half of the services they should qualify for. Health care providers have an opportunity to connect families to these needed services.
9. Important programs that can benefit families and children living in poverty include the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), as well as home-visit and early education programs.
10. Families may cycle in and out of poverty. In the United States, approximately 37% of all children live in poverty during at least a portion of their childhood.
11. In 2017, 19.7% of Ohio children under age 18 lived in related families with incomes below the poverty line.
12. Families living in poverty in Ohio span all races and ethnicities: 28.8% of African American families, 14.3% of Asian American, 26.8% of Latino, 26.7% of Native American and 11.1% of White families.
13. 13.7% of Ohio households were deemed "food-insecure" from 2015 - 2017, based upon report of difficulty providing enough food due to lack of resources.
14. A shifting of poverty over the last decade after the Great Recession has led to a larger and faster increase in poverty rates in the suburbs, as compared to urban or rural areas.
15. Recent efforts have focused on a "two-generation" approach to assisting those struggling with poverty by helping both low-income children and their parents at the same time. For example, a program may enroll parents in job training while children are enrolled in high-quality child care.

References:

- Center for American Progress. (2018). Ohio: Poverty by State. <https://talkpoverty.org/state-year-report/ohio-2018-report/>
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