The Giving Tree

Service Spotlight

Poverty and Hunger

What is Poverty?

Poverty is not having enough money to pay for the most basic things that every human needs, including food, water, shelter, clothing, or medicine.

Child Poverty, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is "extreme deprivation that results in children not having their needs met or not receiving the bare necessities of life due to a low-to-no-income household."

Why Do Some People Live in Poverty?

There are many reasons people might live in poverty. Conflict (wars) can cause people to live in poverty. So can climate change, which affects people who rely on farming to eat and earn a living. Lack of opportunities for education also can lead to poverty. Poor health and hunger contribute to poverty, as well. The Covid-19 pandemic contributed to poverty.

While there are some people who live in poverty who do not work, many do have jobs. However, they often have to work long hours and receive low pay. They do not earn enough money to pay for their basic needs. Sometimes this is due to lack of education, mental or physical health issues, having a disability, old age, or other circumstances.

What Are the Effects of Poverty?

Living in poverty has many negative impacts.

People living in poverty suffer from hunger and malnutrition.

The poor are more susceptible to illness and disease and cannot afford medicine or medical treatment.

People living in poverty may or may not be homeless, but if they do live in a home or apartment, it may not be in a safe area or have basic items needed to live, including furniture, cooking tools, blankets, etc.

Some children in impoverished areas do not attend school, or if they do, the schools they attend lack adequate books, supplies, technology, and support.

This all can contribute to a cycle of poverty.

Facts about Poverty

There are more than 9% of people living in poverty all around the world, including men, women, and children.

11.4% of people in the United States living poverty.

1 in 6 children lives in poverty in the US.

People living in extreme poverty live on $1.90 *or less* a day.

What is Hunger?

While we all can feel 'hungry' from time to time, chronic or persistent hunger is a condition in which people do not get enough food to provide the nutrients for fully productive, active lives. Hunger goes beyond a feeling of discomfort or weakness caused by lack of food because people who suffer from hunger simply do not have enough food available to eat.

Who Is Affected by Hunger?

Hunger and food insecurity can affect anyone: men, women, children, families, veterans, and the elderly. There are no boundaries for these conditions.

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Why Are People Hungry?

Not having enough money to buy food is one of the main reasons people are hungry. This can be caused by loss of a job, low wage employment, chronic illness, unexpected medical bills, or other circumstances.

Natural disasters, wars, and climate change also impact people's lives and contribute to hunger around the world.

Facts about Hunger

1 in 7 people in the US struggle with hunger.

$250 is the average weekly cost to feed a family of 4.

You can find people who are affected by hunger in every community in the United States and people who suffer from hunger live in countries all around the world.

What Are the Effects of Hunger?

Hunger can cause headaches, fatigue, frequent illnesses, lack of energy, and trouble concentrating. Proper nutrition is also critical to physical development and impacts mental health, as well.

How Can We Help?

Learn about the issues of poverty and hunger and then spread awareness about poverty and hunger to make others aware of the problems and learn what they can do to help.

Start a collection for food items, clothing, or household items to support impoverished and hungry people.

Volunteer at a local soup kitchen or food pantry.

Donate fresh produce from your garden or shop for nonperishable foods for local food charities.

Assemble packages for those in need.