

WHAT IS POVERTY?



2011 © creative.com
GARY MARKSTEIN
garymarkstein.com

POVERTY SINKHOLE

Hey! The picture above looks like a **GIANT** slide that has been made from a mushroom, doesn't it? Before you start wondering where that slide is and how can you get there....it is not a slide anybody would want to go on, far from it especially after knowing exactly what it is.

Poverty. What is it?? We are currently living in 2023 where this should not still be a problem, I should be talking past tense as in "back in the day when I was just a nipper" but unfortunately, I am not! Poverty is to put it into easy words when you are completely skint! Where households are struggling to put food on the table, pay their bills that just keep on coming. Families that must decide to feed their children before they can eat. Again, deciding whether to put the heating on or have something to eat as for some doing both is not an option!

Who in their right mind would want to live like that but unfortunately according to statistics printed from UK Parliament 14.4 million people in the UK are living in poverty that is just in the UK!! Absolutely shocking 🤔 isn't it? **Now tell me you want to ride that slide above.** This is 2023 not centuries ago surely things should have got better!

So here is the serious bit. Poverty is affecting working households also; it is not just the unemployed who are struggling, being in poverty has a knock-on effect with other issues including poor health where increased people are dealing with stress, anxiety, and depression. Poor health can stop those looking to seek employment putting more pressure on individuals. Also, education is being affected as a child is less likely to be engaged and fatigued when hungry. In September 2014, the government introduced free school meals to primary aged children starting from reception up to years 1 and 2, those children at least were receiving 1 hot meal a day...but what about the others, do they not matter? Of course, it is a help, but it is not good enough, these big wigs need to live in the real world and see how it is and not just hearing about it whilst sitting behind a fat desk with their fat sandwich. The UK saw food banks popping up across the country which a lot of people are having to rely on but good job they are there and available otherwise people would be hungrier than they already are. I cannot imagine a big wig ever needing one as they are still happy shopping at Waitrose because they can come as far to say that it is not their problem.... but it is everyone's problem because the country needs to pull together to help solve the problem of poverty. Sad to read how rubbish the world has become isn't it? Life should be about enjoying every day your given but unfortunately too many people are feeling the cost-of-living squeeze!!





Hey me again! So, we have all read the sadness regarding poverty. Let us try to change what is happening.... hard I know but we HAVE to try. Let us get our educating hats on and begin to teach our little cherubs as they are so enthusiastic about learning.

Classroom full of eager little cherubs all eyes fixed on you, well apart from Frankie who is happily picking his nose at the back of the class, he may still be hungry after breakfast club (breakfast club is where all pupils are welcome into school before the start of day and are offered breakfast for free!!) Anyway, today we are going to learn about trying to change or help the way we live, some of you may or may not have heard about poverty. Darci immediately shot her hand up eager to tell us what she knew "Poverty is when people find it hard to eat, keep warm and live" Sadly, this is a common issue in many households. Another pupil Drew shouted out "well they should get a job and not be so lazy" explaining that people do have jobs but are struggling and people who are unable to work for health reasons or that they care for someone. You could see Drew is now deep in thought about what was said.

So, cherubs put your heads together and see if we can think of a few ways to change things in schools to keep the cost of things down for families...



The children were producing great ideas, so let us discuss them together.

School uniform swap shop - How would this work?? Not everyone can afford to buy brand new clothes at the end of every school year, so uniform that past and present pupils no longer wear due to fit. We could also use the clothing in lost property that has not been claimed which will hopefully help some families out as they

Fundraisers - We know that school trips are vital for pupils' wellbeing, being in a fun environment altogether especially outdoors, but not all schools can afford to pay for the whole school trip themselves and then ask parents/carers for a fee towards them. What could we do?? We could do things like car washing, walkathon or danceathon we could grow plants and sell them.

Grow our own vegetables - We know how hard it is for some families to put food on the table, we could have a vegetable patch in school, grow things like potatoes, carrots, and various other things, then we could cook some soup and invite parents/carers in to try our very own delicious soup! But Frankie piped up and said, "I'm not eating that it's disgusting," even though he was quite happy earlier eating what was picked from his nose urgh! So, I asked him to explain what he meant he said "I am not eating food that has come out of the ground" I asked why not "it will be all dirty" I explained that it would be cleaned and peeled prior to using in the soup, but still Frankie did not want to have

something that had been grown in the ground, as all Frankie had known was food from the supermarket which was all clean and wrapped up in plastic.



Yep, you guessed it me again! Last one for the time being I promise!

We have talked about poverty, and what ways we can help teach our little cherubs about diverse ways to help making things a bit easier in schools to help our families. But and it is a big but (bit like mine but that is another blog) as we know in life everything comes with pros and cons and sadly regardless of how we try to do things there is always something or someone to rain on our parade.

Let us take the idea of the school uniform swap where past and present pupils who have uniform that is no longer needed could donate them to school to be displayed so that parents/carers who cannot afford to buy new can take an item needed so they do not have to try and find money they do not have. Amazing idea, yes? We try to educate children in a way that they are so enthusiastic about will then rush home at the end of the day to tell everyone what they have been doing. But there will always be one person a snob you could say with a face on saying "I am not putting my child in second hand clothes!" and "why should I give away things that I have paid for and get nothing back" it is not my problem! But one day it could be. So, you might find the child trying to re-educate the parents which is not a terrible thing especially as some are stuck in their ways and live in their own world in their comfortable bubble, but it could help to

change their mindset....next day a bag full of unwanted/needed uniform dropped off at reception...result!

Let us now talk about fundraising, it is an effective way to raise funds especially for school trips where parents/carers are not being asked to contribute or to buy the whole school water bottles to keep them hydrated.

It would not take much to do a car wash all you need is buckets, sponges, and a bit of fairy liquid and your good to go right? But on the other side of the sponge (did you see what I did there) where do we get the money for the materials needed? Donations? And who will pay to have their car washed, is it putting unnecessary pressure on people to spend money they have not got even if it is for a worthy cause? It is all swings and roundabouts, but we can but try.

Last one then growing our own vegetables, a packet of seeds does not cost that much, does it? But again, it isn't just seeds we need, is it? We would need materials to grow our veg and materials to protect them from the elements, pests, and vandals...more money! We could ask local farmers for old pallets, some chicken wire?

Everything comes down to money, what a wonderful world (I bet you put on Louis Armstrong voice saying that bit) it would be if we did not have to worry about money!

