

Defining Poverty¹

Generational Poverty

- Family has never owned land
- Never knew anyone who benefited from education
- Never knew anyone who moved up or was respected in a job
- Highly mobile
- High family Illiteracy
- Focus is on making it through the day

Working Class Poverty

- Working, but rarely have money for any extras
- Most do not own property
- Live paycheck to paycheck
- Few have health care
- Focus on making it two weeks or through the month
- Poverty seen as personal deficiency

Immigrant Poverty

- Have little or no resources
- Language & culture barriers
- Seem to do better than those born into poverty in America
- Poverty viewed as a system problem

Depression Era Poverty

- A time when the societal message was, “We are all in this together.”
- Poverty seen as society problem

Middle Class Temporary/Situational Poverty

- Person grows up in stable environment
- Surrounded by people who are educated or able to earn a living wage
- Attends school regularly
- Has health care
- Has a crisis (health, Divorce, etc.) and income drops
- Generally is able to make it back to middle class
- Has not internalized the poverty as their own fault

¹ From Dr. Donna Beegle’s Communication Across Barriers, website: www.combarriers.com