

How the Poverty Simulation Works

The Community Action Poverty Simulation breaks down stereotypes by allowing participants to step into the real life situations of others.

Poverty is often portrayed as a stand alone issue - but this simulation allows individuals to walk a month in the shoes of someone who is facing poverty and realize how complex and interconnected issues of poverty really are.

- A single parent with limited resources and no transportation must find a way to get to work and get their child to daycare.
- An elderly person must find a way to pay for both utilities and medication.
- A young adult must care for siblings while their parent is incarcerated.
- An elderly couple must raise their grandchildren and deal with their own health and employment issues.

After the experience, individuals then have the opportunity to discuss what they've learned with their peers.

The Community Action Poverty Simulation is a tool that helps participants rethink the challenges that millions of low income individuals must face each and every day. More importantly, this tool helps people identify areas of change that can directly impact the effects of poverty on individuals, families and communities.



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The Community Action Poverty Simulation is a profoundly moving experience. It moves people to think about the harsh realities of poverty and to talk about how communities can address the problem. Most importantly, it moves people to make a difference.

The Community Action Poverty Simulation is the first step to get people and communities moving.

Some examples of groups who have used the Community Action Poverty Simulation experience include:

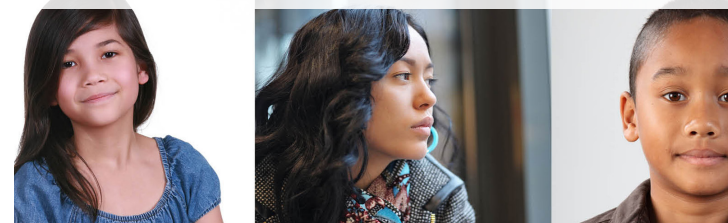
- Customer Service Groups
- Health Care Professionals
- Educators
- Clergy and Congregations
- Social Service Providers
- Elected Officials
- Management Staff
- College Students
- Community Organizations
- Corporations



The Community Action
**POVERTY
SIMULATION®**



RETHINK POVERTY.



**"I had no idea how under-
educated I was on this subject."**

MISSOURI'S
Community Action
Poverty Simulation



"I really felt the stress of being poor and overwhelmed."

"It makes me want to learn more about helping the community."

Living a Month in Poverty...

The simulation involves participants who take on the roles of members of up to 26 families, all facing a variety of challenging, but typical, circumstances.

To start the simulation exercise, each family is given a card explaining its unique circumstances. It is then the families' task to provide food, shelter, and other basic necessities by accessing various community resources during the course of four 15-minute "weeks."

In addition, about 20 volunteers - preferably people who have experienced poverty - play the roles of resource providers in the community. This allows individuals who have first hand knowledge of poverty bring their perceptions to the exercise.

The Community Action Poverty Simulation is conducted in a large room. Participants are seated in family groups and community resources are located at tables around the perimeter of the room. The facilitator opens the simulation with an orientation to the activity, goes over ground rules, and answers participant questions during the exercise.

The activity lasts about three hours. This time frame includes an introduction and briefing by the facilitator, the simulation exercise, and a guided debriefing in which participants and volunteers share their observations and insights from the activity.

What is Included in a Community Action Poverty Simulation Kit?

Community Action Poverty Simulation kits can be purchased from Missouri Community Action Network, a nonprofit statewide association which owns the copyright. Each kit is all-inclusive and reusable.

Each kit contains:

A Director's Manual containing instructions for the facilitator on how to run a simulation, a sample invitation letter and news release, a script for the opening of the simulation and an outline for the debriefing exercise. The director's manual contains everything you need to know about running a simulation.

Family Packets for 26 separate families which will accommodate up to 88 participants. The Family Packets include items such as money, transportation passes, identification cards, and a scenario which explains the family's situation. Examples include:

- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
- Working Parents
- Single Parent Households
- Elderly Adults
- Young Adult Caring for Underage Siblings

Resource Packets containing instructions and materials for each community resource.

15 Community Resources include:

- U Trust Us National Bank
- Quik Cash
- Community Action Agency
- Interfaith Services
- Food-A-Rama
- Sweaney's Mortgage and Realty Company
- Big Dave's Pawnshop
- Realville Police Department
- Friendly Utility Company
- Illegal Activities Person
- Department of Social Services
- Realville School
- Building Blocks Daycare
- General Employer
- Community Healthcare

Accessories such as printed signage, calculators, badges, dolls to represent young children in the simulation, cards, clipboards, and more.

A Compact Disc which contains pdf files of all the materials so that any which are lost can be reprinted with ease. In addition, there is a kit rebuild list to make it faster to put your kit back together once it's been used.

RETHINK POVERTY.



"I didn't realize how hard it was just to do everyday things."