Accommodating Students of Poverty in Middle Schools

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Description

Poverty is an epidemic that is affecting millions of students in the United States. This literature review reports on issues pertaining to middle level students and how these students are affected by poverty. We examined 10 resources, including education books and empirical articles in academic journals, to report on findings and make recommendations for middle level educators about how to improve a child's chances of rising above poverty.

Poverty and Adolescents

❖14 million children live in families with incomes below the federal poverty level

❖Many times adolescents of poverty are at increased risk to drop out and pursue their jobs full-time

❖The average annual income for a high school dropout in 2005 was $17,299 compared to $26,933 for a high school graduate. There is a connection with graduating high school and higher income.

Programs to Address Poverty

❖Title 1 Reading and "free and reduced cost" lunch programs assist students who are falling behind in class

❖After school programs assist students with homework and provide tutoring

❖It does not matter if a student suffering from poverty is in a school of poverty or a school of privilege; it is still the school's job to academically support all students.

The Role of the Teacher

❖Teachers need to understand the values and experiences of children in poverty

❖Educators should have high expectations of all students and believe in the importance of social justice

❖Educators should connect with their students' culture, which is shaped by home life and heritage.

Recommendations

❖Educators need to learn about and understand poverty

❖Schools need to become a safe haven for students and advocate for students who are impoverished

❖Educators should model the importance of education

❖Teachers should become a strong support system

❖Create lessons that are relevant and, most importantly, **avoid stereotypes of students who are in poverty**