

STRATEGIES TO WORK EFFECTIVELY WITH STUDENTS

WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED POVERTY

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- 1) Build highly connected relationships with students and provide them with the ongoing support and guidance they need to experience academic and social success.
- 2) Help students to identify and change any self-defeating beliefs they have as a result of having experienced poverty. Examples include the belief that they are less worthy than students from wealthier backgrounds or that they are being disloyal to their parent or parents if they surpass their level of achievement.
- 3) Provide students with appropriate opportunities to discuss the challenges, trauma, etc. they have experienced in life to help them heal their emotional wounds and make school more relevant to their lives.
- 4) Create a learning environment that is high on academic and social expectations, but emotionally safe for students since they are prone to shut down or become overly reactive when they feel overwhelmed, threatened or shamed.
- 5) Have a deep belief that every student can succeed academically and socially if they are taught the right tools and provided with the encouragement they need.
- 6) Identify and meet the developmental needs of students for trust, comfort, safety, security, stimulation, power, etc.
- 7) Teach students to develop greater emotional intelligence so that they can become more self-aware, resilient, empathic, etc. and effectively resolve conflicts.
- 8) Provide opportunities for students to learn and practice problem-solving skills.
- 9) Always remain calm when responding to disruptive students because they may try to recreate the conflict and chaos they have experienced until they become comfortable with a more peaceful environment.
- 10) Avoid power struggles which students often view as an opportunity to gain the control and empowerment they crave.
- 11) Teach students how to use cognitive and mindfulness strategies to develop positive self-talk, effective coping strategies, mental discipline, self-regulation, peace of mind, etc.

- 12) Inspire students to develop hope and optimism about their futures and to identify and work towards specific goals.
- 13) Focus on a systematic and directive teaching approach which emphasizes highly scripted and fast paced instruction that breaks tasks down into small, sequential steps that students practice until they have achieved mastery. Be careful not to expect a student to achieve beyond their level of ability because this causes them to experience frustration and often shut down.
- 14) Be explicit in what you expect from students rather than suggestive or subtle.
- 15) Provide students with the opportunity to receive tutoring and complete their homework during or after school.
- 16) Provide students with opportunities to “play” in age appropriate ways and express themselves through art, music, drama, etc.
- 17) Develop a close working relationship with the parents of your students so that you can work collaboratively with them to help their children maximize their academic and social success.
- 18) Teach students and their parents how to effectively advocate to insure that their academic and emotional needs will be met within the school community.
- 19) Develop entrepreneurship programs where students can learn specific job skills and make money.