

Simple Definition of Poverty

Horizons is focused on **poverty, leadership** and **community**. It explores the perceptions and the sources of poverty, recognizing that it isn't always just about lack of money. The program focuses on poverty, because poverty impacts everyone in a community. Our goals on poverty are for communities to identify it, commit collectively to do something about it and begin to take strategic action to change it.

Poverty defined is the "extent to which an individual [or community] goes without resources." The resources are the following:

- **Financial:** Having the money to purchase goods and services.
- **Emotional:** Being able to choose and control emotional responses, particularly to negative situations, without engaging in self-destructive behavior. This is an internal resource and shows itself through stamina, perseverance, and choice.
- **Mental:** Having the mental abilities and acquired skills (reading, writing, computing) to deal with daily life.
- **Spiritual:** Believing in divine purpose and guidance.
- **Physical:** Having physical health and mobility.
- **Supportive Systems:** Having friends, family and backup resources available to access in times of need. These are external resources.
- **Relationship/Role Models:** Having frequent access to adult(s) who are appropriate, who are *nurturing* to children and youth and who do not engage in self-destructive behavior.
- **Knowledge of Hidden Rules:** Knowing the unspoken cues and habits of a group.
- **Coping Strategies:** Being able to engage in procedural self-talk and the mindsets that allow issues to be moved from the concrete to the abstract. It is the ability to translate from the personal to the issue.

Adapted from the book Bridges Out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities, by Ruby Payne, Ph.D., Philip DeVol and Terie Dreussi Smith, 2001.