

Child Poverty: Make A Difference. Help out A Child Living In Poverty, And Make a Mark on The World.

By: Elija

Introduction:

Over 16 million kids in the US, 22% of all children, live in families with incomes below the federal poverty level, \$23,550 a year for a family of four. And that's ONLY in the US. Research shows that, on average, families need an income of about twice that level to cover basic expenses. By this standard, 45% of kids live in low-income families.

Most of these kids have parents who work, but low wages and unstable employment leave their families struggling to make ends meet. Because of this, many children are left out on the streets, with nowhere to go, yet some of them are lucky enough to be saved, by strangers who know nothing about them other than the simple fact that they are in need of a home.

The world needs more people willing to offer those children just that, because these children are our future. Our world is not only in our hands, but one day, and one day soon, it's going to be in theirs. What impacts them, in no matter what way, will somehow have a small effect on everyone else, and many of those small effects will build up into something really BIG. Whether it's something good or bad, remains to be seen from the actions we take now.

We are responsible for the next generation, and it's our job to get them what they need to live and help our future: A roof over their heads, a warm bed to sleep in, proper food, and a good environment to live and grow up in. Or, at least, we need to help them on their way to getting there. Together, if enough people are willing to work together, we can all help those children, and make sure they get where they need to go. I'm willing. Are the rest of you?

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## Explain The Issue:

Child poverty is a very serious worldwide issue including the exploitation of children, young marriage, child labor, etcetera. Many children die before they even reach age 5, and many from causes that can be prevented with proper immunizations, proper nutrition and adequate water and sanitation. Also, child poverty puts children at risk for exploitation through sex trafficking, child labor and early marriage, and children living in impoverished areas face increased danger of experiencing violence, and death, from armed conflict or even being recruited as child soldiers.

Research is clear that poverty is the single greatest threat to children's well-being. But effective public policies – to make work pay for low-income parents and to provide high-quality early care and learning experiences for their children – can make a difference. Investments in the most *vulnerable* children are also extremely critical.

## Current Events:

The issue of Child Poverty affects many people, both locally and globally, especially in Asia and South America. In fact, there are 16.4 million American children living in poverty. How does this affect the world? That's nearly one quarter (22.6%) of all of our children. Yet, even more alarming is that the percentage of poor children has climbed by 4.5 percent since the start of the Great Recession in 2007. And poor means poor. For a family of three with one child under 18, the poverty line is \$18,400 and \$23,550, a year, for a family of four, meaning that these families will be unable to afford proper clothes, food, and sanitation. Take Jesse Staley as an example. Jesse is a American teenager who dreams of graduating from high school and attending her prom. While her friends buy prom dresses and arrange after-prom parties, she struggles to feed her sisters and

brothers. As other families choose between colleges, hers must choose between medical care and welfare. As many of her friends live the life of a carefree adolescent, Jesse assumes the role of the caretaker in her family. The oldest of three children, she must look after her siblings while her father ekes out a living driving a truck. Her father is a hard-working man, but his 12- to 15-hour shifts don't provide even near enough income to pay the bills.

#### Methods of Change:

There are many organizations that are currently addressing this issue, both locally and globally. Two organizations that I will talk about are CDF(Children's Defense Fund) and World Vision. 'World Vision' works to build a better future for the the children by sponsoring poor children's families. such as Angeline, from the Philippines, born March 29th 2010. Angeline lives with her parents, 1 brother, and 3 sisters. Her parents struggle to provide for the family. Her father is a driver. Despite their efforts, it is difficult to meet the family's needs. Angeline is only one of thousands of children all over the world that are barely getting by with what she/they have. Locally, CDF's new report, The State of America's Children® 2014, shows for the first time the majority of children in America under two are now children of color. One in three of them is poor. The youngest most vulnerable children of all races and ethnicities are the poorest age group. Over 1 in 4 infants, toddlers and preschoolers — nearly 5 million — are poor during the years of rapid brain development.

#### Call for Action:

Worldwide, around 7.6 million children die each year from the causes listed above. Millions of children around the world miss out on their childhood as a result of poverty. Poverty deprives them of the capabilities needed to survive, develop and thrive. It prevents them from enjoying equal opportunities. In Bolivia, 12-year old boys toil deep underground in the suffocating heat of dangerous silver mines. Over in the Philippines, children as young as nine are separated from their families to work as servants. And in North America, girls are forced into prostitution. All these young people, and millions more around the world, are involved in what the International Labor Organization defines as the 'worst forms' of child labor—extremely dangerous exploitation that often disproportionately involves indigenous youth. People are saying many different things about child poverty, such as "This poverty is unacceptable. We've got to change it." Yet the question for all of us is, "What can we do about it?". Note the *we*, and not *I*. I went around asking my classmates to write down the first thing that came to mind, and one stood out against all others: a 'Hungry and sick children' comment, and that person's reasoning behind it, 'If they're homeless or poor, which is basically what poverty is, you know the kids won't have proper nutrition and sanitation, which will lead to them getting really sick.' I could tell they really put a lot of thought into it, which was interesting, to know that they were willing to think about it and really put their own words into it, not just because of what they heard others say, like I expected everyone to do.

Research is clear that poverty is the single greatest threat to children's well-being. But effective public policies – to make work pay for low-income parents and to provide high-quality early care and learning experiences for their children – can make a difference. Investments in the most vulnerable children are also critical. You can help with this by writing to people of great importance, such as Mayor De Blasio at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/static/pages/officeofthemayor/contact.shtml> or President Obama, at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/submit-questions-and-comments>, and trying to convince them to make changes to the system that will benefit the poor, or volunteering at local soupkitchens and shelters, to help feed hungry people, after all, the children are our future, assuming they survive the present.

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| CDF(Children's Defense Fund, Local Organization)/Project: Proper Health care coverage for children                     | Unfortunately, there are not many specifications on what the CDF does, however, ways to help are to donate money, which will go to funding the poor children of America's health care. If possible, I would advise to do this.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | You can contact the CDF at<br>Email: <a href="mailto:cdinfo@childrensdefense.org">cdinfo@childrensdefense.org</a><br><a href="http://www.childrensdefense.org">www.childrensdefense.org</a><br>And call them at 800-CDF-1200 (800-233-1200) |
| NCCP(National Center for Children in Poverty)/Project: Spreading the word about child poverty and making a change.     | A specific project of NCCP's is <i>Improving the Odds for Young Children</i> , which provides information to answer key questions about states' efforts to support the well-being and school success of young children. You can help this organization by spreading the word, and investing in vulnerable children with donations such as old toys, blankets, clothes, etc.                                                                                                                | You can contact the NCCP at<br>215 W. 125th Street, 3rd Floor<br>New York, NY 10027<br>Telephone: 646-284-9600<br>E-Mail: <a href="mailto:info@nccp.org">info@nccp.org</a>                                                                  |
| World Vision/Project: Providing food and shelter for children in orphanages through child sponsorship.                 | In a community in Panchbibi, Bangladesh, moms were struggling to provide for their families. They had no way to earn an income, so they provided sewing machines and taught the moms how to use them. Then, they provided training on how to start a business. Now, moms can earn enough income to provide for their children and send them to school. You can help them by sponsoring a child!                                                                                            | 310 Tiffany Street Bronx, NY 10474<br><br>718.292.5600<br><br><a href="mailto:nyprograms@worldvision.org">nyprograms@worldvision.org</a> 310                                                                                                |
| Save The Children/Project: Well, 'save the children'. Make sure all kids have the healthy and happy life they deserve. | One specific project of Save The Children is 'Get Ready, Get Safe,' a worldwide initiative designed to help people prepare for worst-case scenarios, generate emergency plans for our most vulnerable populations, ensure supplies are in place before disasters, and train those most responsible for children's safety. One specific way to help is to send money to the 'Save the Children' organization, which will then use the money you send to buy gifts for the children in need. | <b>Save the Children U.S. Headquarters</b><br>54 Wilton Road, Westport, CT 06880<br>+1(203)221-4030 (8:00am-5:00pm EST, M-F)<br>+1(800)728-3843 (8:00am-5:00pm EST, M-F)                                                                    |

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| Feed The Children/Project: Providing proper food and nutrition to children around the world. | Feed The Children provides nourishing meals every school day to more than 350,000 children. Their international programs, including child sponsorships, meet the immediate needs of children while also addressing the root causes of poverty through education and livelihood development. You can help by donating, or even taking action yourself and handing out food and old blankets/clothes out to the people living in shelters and/ or needing to go to soup kitchens. | Public Relations<br>(public.relations@feedthechildren.org)<br>Public Relations phone: +1(405) 949-5152<br>To contact the international department:<br>International<br>(International.info@feedthechildren.org) |
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#### Conclusion:

Many exploit child poverty for their own personal gain, such as an issue I have heard about where adults stood by, supervising a group of children living in poverty, and each time a passing tourist, that thought they were helping the children gave money, who would the money go to instead of the children? The adults. Far too many people in this world are greedy like this, and use the suffering of others for personal gain. People react differently to child Poverty. Some try to put an end to and fix it, while others use it and twist it to their own selfish needs and wishes.

People react differently to child poverty, some are broken hearted at the mere thought and try desperately to help end it, while other barely spare a second glance. I personally think the former is better than the latter option, because it at least will do something to make the world a better place. People react strongly, because of the natural human emotion of sympathy. This makes people feel bad for those who are suffering, and want to help, and this feeling is sometimes so strong that the person in question actually does something. However....there are often cases where one will choose to ignore this feeling, and do nothing at all. I believe that this is what many call ignorance. Please, try to help put an end to this devastating poverty. After all, united, we'll stand strong, face our problems head on, and maybe even put an end to them. Divided we'll only fall further into our problems until they reach a point where we can't solve them at all.

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