THE STRANDS OF POVERTY: Mission's Poverty Reduction Forum

Presented by:
Mission Community Services Society

FACILITATION PROVIDED BY:

FUNDING PROVIDED BY:
SPARC BC

17 March 2018

The Strands of Poverty
Mission's Poverty Reduction Forum

Executive Summary:

Thanks to a grant from **SPARC BC** and the support of **Mission Community Services Society** and **Hope Central,** coordinated through the **Stone Soup Initiative**, the citizens of Mission were able to have a direct voice as the Province of BC creates its new Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Using a three-stage process of citizen engagement, our local forum produced and validated some clear themes about poverty. Metaphorically speaking, our work found that living in poverty is often like being tied up in wire.

- It's incredibly difficult to get free.
- The "wire" of poverty is comprised of many different "strands" or barriers, such as trauma, child support, educational issues, welfare limitations and access challenges.
- Every person in poverty experiences these strands in different ways, but they are often woven together in complex tangles. Sometimes a person is "bound" by a few thick strands, while another may be bound by many, long-standing issues.

While recognizing these "strands" was important, our work focused on thematic barriers that overlay many of these barriers. We asked the community to think about creative ways for overcoming issues such as bureaucracy, indignity, inequity, access, resiliency and non-professional supports.

Our process:

A three-stage process was used:

1. **Focus Group:** Local community agencies referred a diverse group of citizens who were trained as co-facilitators and helped us shaped questions based on their experiences and observations of poverty. This group established a framework called, "The Strands of Poverty", which forms Part One of this report.
2. **Public Forum/Kitchen Table Discussions:** With the assistance of the co-facilitators, a public dinner was held. Approximately 100 citizens from all walks of life attended and took part. After dinner, the forum began with a brief presentation of "The Strands of Poverty" then people were invited to participate in "kitchen table" discussions around the 5 keys themes produced in the Focus Group. Our aim was on solutions and citizens gave their input verbally, by adding notes, by voting (using stickers). This input was compiled as "Part Two: How Can We Improve" of this report.
3. **On-line Survey:** A 10-question survey was created based on "The Strands" and was widely distributed via social media over a one-week period. 60 individual responses were collected. These responses were used to:
   - Validate the themes identified by the Focus Group
   - Describe what people believe causes entrenched poverty
   - Offer suggestions for improvement
   - Describe who is responsible for addressing poverty
   - Describe the public's confidence and optimism for overcoming poverty.

Our Focus Group/Co-facilitators:

Thanks to *Mission Friendship Centre, Riverside College, Mission & Community Services*, we were able to create a group of co-facilitators who had experienced poverty across a spectrum. Our group included children, women, elders, immigrants, adult students, people in addiction recovery, people from traumatic backgrounds, people from generational poverty and people of indigenous descent.

Many thanks to our talented and passionate team:

  - names removed.

Our findings:

The Strands of Poverty:

Education & Awareness Factors	*What people don't know keeps them poor.* *Poverty can be learned behaviour.* *Negative social stigma and a lack of dignity keep people poor.*
Welfare System Factors	*"The welfare system is a rut."*
Equity and Assessment Factors	*Poor people are still individuals, but our systems don't see them that way.*
Support Services Factors	*Many other services are needed if people are going to get an education or job.*
Healthcare Factors	*Untreated health issues create barriers.* *Dealing with the healthcare system keeps people poor.*
Housing Factors	*Stable housing is a base for overcoming poverty, but it's hard to find, afford and keep.*
Minimum Wage Issues	*The minimum wage entrenches poverty.*
Bureaucratic Issues	*Our systems are complex, slow and confusing.*
The School System	*Our schools are an under-utilized resource.*

Our Themes:

As we explored these strands, five themes continued to re-emerge. They were:

1. The system needs to do a better job of assessing and responding to people as individuals.
2. People need supports and skills to help them build resilience so that they are not overwhelmed by life's challenges.
3. People need easier access to information, transportation and services.
4. People need to be treated with more dignity and less bureaucracy when they seek help.
5. Our system needs to focus on giving a "hand-up" rather than a "hand-out."

Our survey results strongly validated these themes and echoed the solutions and suggestions from our public forum.

Our Solutions and Suggestions:

While our public forum produced many excellent and practical solutions, some of the most popular suggestions were:

1. Create "triage centres" or community service "hubs."
    a. Make it possible to get help through any door entered.
    b. Build up existing, successful programs.
2. Enhance training for front-line workers and reception staff, especially in the areas of:
    a. Empathy
    b. Assessment
    c. Knowledge of community resources
3. Hire more workers. Reduce caseloads.
4. Use more volunteers, especially:
    a. Mentors and advocates
    b. Navigators
    c. People who have lived experience
5. Create bridging and incentives systems for people bettering their skills or seeking work, and for "giving back" as mentors or navigators.
6. Use schools, community groups (cultural, faith, seniors) and existing amenities to:
    a. Teach life skills
    b. Create non-professional supports
    c. Teach about resources
    d. Teach resilience and emotional acumen
7. Different methods/types of support (rather than simply financial assistance), including:
    a. Free childcare

b. Free education, training, parenting courses
c. Life skills & financial literacy training
d. Flexible housing assistance; short-term mortgage help
8. Simplify and coordinate the processes for getting help.
9. Use mechanisms (eco-villages, supportive communities, electronic hubs, community bulletin boards) to encourage sharing between neighbours.
10. Encourage ride-sharing.
11. Encourage communal living.
12. Reduce stigma within services and the community.
13. Deliver services in a consistent, safe and dignified manner and with a focus on building relationship.

Who's responsible?

Our survey results demonstrated a strong support for a broad-based community approach for addressing homelessness. Above all constituencies, the respondents strongly supported the notion that the person living in poverty has both a right and a responsibility to be engaged in a leading role in tackling his/her challenges. At the government level , there was strongest support for leadership by the Provincial government, but the federal and local governments were close behind, suggesting that taxpayers support a multi-lateral approach. Businesses and employers were seen as having the lowest responsibility for addressing poverty, but family, friends and neighbours received strong support as resources.

How confident are we?

73% of survey respondents were at least somewhat confident that we can reduce poverty in the long-term, but only 10% were very confident. Even amongst those who are optimistic, there is a clear concern that our governments and community leadership will continue to under-resource our services and apply Band-Aid solutions that entrench poverty further. Our work showed that there is a clear appetite (and even an urgency) for addressing poverty at its roots, but that the public is seeking opportunities to engage in and develop a system that creates real and lasting change.

Part One: Focus Group Responses:
What keeps people in poverty?

Education & Awareness Factors

What People Don't Know Keeps Them Poor:
- Lack of knowledge about:
    - Resources and programs
    - Workplace expectations
    - Money skills (e.g. budgeting)
- Many helpers and professionals do not know about resources
- *"People may need technology or technical skills to find out about programs but many don't have access"* (or skills to access).
- Many don't know where to find help or direction; hesitate or feel uncomfortable seeking help
- Programs need to address people with disabilities and mental health challenges, including addictions

Poverty As Learned Behaviour:
- People may learn the "skills" and "culture" of poverty and not know there are other ways
- Some people are raised in a climate that can be accustomed to poverty:
- Not raised to plan ahead or create a vision
- *"No dreams or hope"*
- Not raised with self-esteem/confidence, or abused and self-esteem is taken away
- Not raised to have a work ethic or drive
- *"Some people are taught ways to "use" the system rather than how to get ahead."*
- *"Given a fish, rather than being taught to fish"*

Public Education: Negative Stigma and a Lack of Dignity Keep People Poor:
- Social stigma about poverty and accessing help may keep people from seeking help.
- Lack of understanding and dignity within public means fewer resources; no long term plan; no connectivity, *"no investment in people"*
- *"Some people perceive that they are all alone."* Some have had bad experiences and have learned to distrust authority and/or government
- The perception of all poor people as mentally ill, criminal, addicted or "*shifty"* makes landlords nervous about renting and they create barriers.

Welfare System Factors

***"The Welfare System is a Rut"*:**
- Programs don't include an option for learning/improving; they tend to keep people in a rut
- *"Welfare is not connected to getting better."* (learning; contributing; working)
- Services may treat people without dignity (invasion of privacy, feelings of judgment, long waits, bureaucracy and confusion, changing rules)
- The welfare system lacks a *"bridge"* for people who begin to work/make income. *"Just when you start to get ahead, you have to give too much money back."*
- Welfare system doesn't offer enough choices in the form of support (vouchers for food/childcare/housing/work clothing) – *"If you have high expenses in one area (e.g. rent) it means no food."*
- Welfare system payment methods mean that cheque cashers are making money off the poor.
- The bureaucracy of welfare consumes too much time and energy; adds stress; keeps people from being well or taking care of their futures/children/health

Equity and Assessment Factors

Poor People are Still Individuals, but Our Systems Don't See Them that Way:
- There isn't enough equity/consistency in systems. *"Some people qualify for support; others don't and it's not fair."*
  - Often seems to depend on the commitment and creativity of your social worker/financial aid worker.
  - Maybe Social Worker education needs to be improved.
  - Maybe there needs to be better quality control from one Ministry office to the next.
- Rent has gone up faster than welfare. People need to cheat (i.e. crime, breaking rental agreements, cash jobs) to live. *"Each town has a different range of rent prices (and other costs of living) and this should be considered by welfare."*
- Wait times are too long and don't coincide. A person could have a job opportunity and lose the job because their daycare subsidy is slow to come or because a typo/error on the form means that they have to re-apply. There's no way to speed things up when needed.
- *"People who live in rural areas need more options."*
-

<h1 style="text-align:center; color:red;">Support Services Factors</h1>

Many other Services are Needed if People are Going to Get an Education or Job:
- Not enough childcare and/or subsidy isn't enough
- *"There are five questions women ask before they accept a service:*
  - *How meaningful will this relationship (with the agency or service provider) be to me?*
  - *Will I be treated with dignity (right from the start)?*
  - *Will I have transportation to and from the service?*
  - *How can I learn more about the program before I go?*
  - *Will I have childcare while I am engaged with the program?"*
- There should be more resources for helping people find work:
  - Variety of work options
  - Give people access to hygiene facilities and work clothing
  - *"Some people are too poor to be able to go find or get work. They're rejected before they even begin."*

<h1 style="text-align:center; color:red;">Healthcare Factors</h1>

Untreated health issues create barriers:
- Lack of free dental care is a major barrier to employment. *"Bad teeth mean difficulty finding work."*
- Need money or vouchers for healthy food and overall health. *"Looking unhealthy keeps people from hiring you." "Cheaper food is often less healthy food."*
- Untreated mental illness and addictions undermine access to housing. Many landlords are so wary of mental health issues that they require unreasonable things (credit checks, criminal record searches, references, costly deposits). They lie and tell you places are rented if you look poor.

Dealing with the healthcare system keeps people poor:
- Lengthy wait times
- Unable to access specialists or GPs
- Transportation to healthcare is an issue, especially for people in remote areas.
- *"MSP is a barrier because many people believe they can't go to doctor if they haven't paid or stayed up-to-date."*

Housing Factors

Stable Housing is a Base for Overcoming Poverty, but it's hard to Find, Afford and Keep:

- It's hard to find housing. *"It is rented before we get there (or landlords tell us that it is)."*
- *"We don't know where to find housing agencies or programs."*
- Renting a home is complex/bureaucratic/intimidating/daunting
- Landlord and tenant relationships constantly break down and landlords sometimes kick people out even if they don't have the right. *"By the time anyone can enforce the rules, it's too late."*
- If you're mentally ill, most landlords don't want to rent to you.
- *"If a home is affordable, it's probably a long way away from work or programs. It costs a lot in time or money to travel."*
- There are too many *"hoops"* to renting (e.g. credit checks, criminal record checks, references, perfect appearance).
- Many people are experiencing *"renovictions"* due to rise in property values. *"There's a loophole in the law that lets people evict you so that they can radically increase the rent."*
- *"Landlords can be very picky because there is so much demand right now."* They rarely choose the people who are most desperate. *"If you're on assistance, they have no reason to take you."*
- Both landlords and tenants need to improve their skills and knowledge.
- *"There are too many rentals run by management companies, so the landlord doesn't really get to know you."* Management companies are too quick to evict. Many absentee landlords and/or management companies who don't respond to concerns from tenants.
- Rents increase too suddenly, too much and too often.
- Landlords feel at-risk, so they are extra careful. *"The housing breakdown is really a relationship breakdown [between tenants and landowners]."*
- *"There's no protection when a roommate defaults on you."*

Minimum Wage Issues

The Minimum Wage Entrenches Poverty:

- *"Minimum wage doesn't keep up with inflation."*
- *"The minimum wage isn't enough to live on."*
- *"It would be different if you could go to school while earning minimum age. But you can't go to school on minimum wage."*

Bureaucratic Issues

Our Systems are Complex, Slow and Confusing:
- *"Everyone has a different form, even though they all want to know the same things about you."*
- *"They are too precise about everything. If you make a mistake, they refuse you and make you start over again."*
- There needs to be help for people to get through the system, but staff often don't see it as their job to help you navigate. *"It's ironic. If you were good at working your way through the system, you probably wouldn't need some of the services they offer."*

The School System

Our Schools are an Underutilized Resource:
- Our schools could do more to teach financial literacy and economic resilience. *"Some school programs are a Bandaid. They need to teach life skills and money skills."*
- *"We need more adult ed."* Adult and career education need to be more affordable. Tuition needs to be lower and people should be able to study while they work or for a shorter amount of time so that they don't have to go without an income. *"We should be able to upgrade in our schools."*
- *"Schools need to be more flexible (i.e. for children and parents)."* Schools need to respond to problems with dignity and flexibility. They need to take a student-centred approach.
- *"School-based social workers are a good idea."* (N.B. Mission recently piloted a school-based social worker program.)
- Some things schools are doing well include food and support services located in our schools (e.g. breakfast club; Starfish Backpacks; Club Kids; counsellors).

Focus Group Themes

1. The system needs to do a better job of assessing and responding to people as individuals.

2. People need supports and skills to help them build resilience so that they are not overwhelmed by life's challenges.

3. People need easier access to information, transportation and services.

4. People need to be treated with more dignity and less bureaucracy when they seek help.

5. Our system needs to focus on giving a "hand-up" rather than a "hand-out."

Part Two: How Can We Improve?

(Note: Bold responses were supported or repeated multiple times.)

1. The system needs to do a better job of assessing and responding to people as individuals.

<u>Triage Centres:</u>
- *There should be a "triage centres" that people know they can go to for help.* *(Highly emphasized theme.)*

<u>Worker Skills:</u>
- *The workers need to know to ask questions and VALIDATE so the person needing help feels heard and valued.*
- *Stop bullying and teasing.*
- *Retrain secretaries and office assistants [so that] they are sensitive and validating to people walking in the door (at Mental Health, Community Services, Income Assistance). (Highly emphasized theme.)*
- *Train front-desk staff to be able to access all resources and to be better connected to the services in the community.*
- *Don't judge people by their looks.*
- *Help people to feel better about themselves because of what you did [to help]*

<u>Workload / Caseload:</u>
- *Train more assistance workers.*
- *Cut positions at the top [if needed] and **give workers a more manageable case load.***

<u>Relationship-Building and Intake:</u>
- *Use volunteers that can start the [helping/intake] process by creating relationships.*
- *We need to listen first before we attempt to respond to needs.*
- *Smile and greet people when they come in for services.*
- *Call people back more soon.*

<u>Assess Best Times to Pay Assistance:</u>
- *Instead of having a mass payout of assistance funds [try] a method where a person is assessed and payment for some is in the middle of the month and for others at the end of the month.*

<u>In-person Processes:</u>

- *Less paperwork to access resources.*
- *More in-person/personal interviews.*
- *[We want to] talk to real people not computers.*

Outreach/Navigation/Assistance:
- *Outreach workers from the ministry to direct the street person to an agency that assists in filling out forms.*
- *Outreach provides a mailing address for [people with unstable housing] mail to come to so they can access funds.*

Deeper Assessment:
- *The system needs to take into consideration where the person comes from generationally [and] their personal experiences [when interacting and allocating resources].*
- *Front line people need to listen without assuming they know the person's story. Be personable, compassionate and nonjudgmental.*
- *Workers should check for understanding by the client.*
- *Everyone has their own history/challenges/abilities, etc. Beyond meeting basic needs, [the system] should be flexible and appropriate.*

Offer alternatives to money:
- *Give people the things they don't have.*
- *Not only offer money. Offer resources and basic things (shampoo, food, buss passes, toothbrush).*
- *Maybe use a point system. Different people given different amounts of points [that] can be exchanged for things.*
- *Offer mortgage help to people [in short term distress]*
- *Offer money management training*
- *Have a long list of what people can come in for*

2. People need supports and skills to help them build resilience so that they are not overwhelmed by life's challenges.

Free Services:
- **Free Childcare & Parental Support**
  - *This was a highly emphasized theme.*
  - *Co-op Childcare*
  - *Resources for dads*
  - *More parenting groups*
- **Free Counselling**
- **Free University and Job Training**

- o *Ability to gain further work experience / upgrade*
  - o ***This was a highly emphasized theme.***
- Free Medical

Scaled services:
- ***Start with meeting basic needs (food, shelter, hygiene, laundry, medical services) in a dignified way, then other more person-specific needs can be worked on.***

Co-Ops:
- *Childcare*
- ***Cooking***
- ***Shared meals***

Access to help and information:
- ***Smaller "community hubs" throughout the city. Have community guides and resources there.***
- ***Advertise resources around the community, not just on-line. Use schools (all ages), staff rooms of minimum wage jobs, coordinated service "hubs". Use notice boards.***
- ***Fund existing spaces and programs that are good at building connections so that they can grow and expand, creating relationships that support resiliency. (Highly emphasized theme.)***
- ***Use schools to inform the community about programs. (Highly emphasized theme.)***
- *Use radio, poster boards and Internet to spread the word.*

Teach about poverty and resilience:
- ***Teach Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in school so that kids can understand their basic needs. Teach resiliency in schools. (Highly emphasized theme.)***
- ***[Hold more] information sessions within the community for different age groups. Focus on different themes (medical, emotional, spiritual, taxes and more).***
- ***Teach people about financial literacy. Include education about the causes of poverty in our curriculum.***
- ***Teach Zones [of Regulation] in classrooms and make it safe for students to express themselves.***
- *Workers who are trained to go into school assemblies and tell students how they can help and where there is help in the community.*

Non-professional supports:

- *Use resources and methods like Bridges Out of Poverty (which connects people with a group of non-professional supporters and allies) to provide supportive communities of people around people who are facing challenges with moving forward.*
- *Train people/peers to act as advocates, peer supports and navigators.*
- *Support organizations to train and connect peer supports. (Highly emphasized theme.)*
- *Create more organizations to connect people with peers and volunteers.*

Employment Support:
- *Individualize support for people with employment barriers. Assist with the application and interview process.*
- *Assist employers in dealing with challenges and mistakes.*
- *Celebrate milestones and successes [by people moving forward].*

Leadership Philosophy:
- *Empower people. Lead from behind.*

"Inclusive Eco-Village:"
- *This was a highly emphasized theme.*
- *Housing communities with shared meals & chores*
- *Pooled resources such as childcare and clothing*

3. People need easier access to information, transportation and services.

Creating "Word of Mouth" is Key:
- *This was a highly emphasized theme.*
- *Bulletin boards in common areas (community mailboxes, bus stops, Laundromats, community centres)*
- *Inform neighbours*
- *Advertise using:*
  - *Billboards*
  - *Bus benches*
  - *Use Craigslist*
  - *Flyers*
  - *Seniors centres*
  - *Newspaper*
- *Create an on-line place where local people can post housing needs and openings.*

More Transportation in Remote [and Rural] Areas:

- *[In our area] this is needed in Silverdale, Silverhill, Hatzic neighbourhoods.*
- ***Could use buses or community carpoolers, even if the service came just a few times a week***
- ***Ridesharing*** *(Highly emphasized theme.)*
  - *Use community billboards and electronic platforms to get the message out.*
  - *Update regularly.*
  - *Use Craigslist*
  - *Flyers*
  - *[Post at] Seniors' Centres*
- *Ensure that [public] transportation uses a circle route*
- *We need a way to reach out and share.*
- *People need a ride. People give a ride.*
- *Have a way for people to help share the cost of gas, insurance, wear and tear.*

Make it Possible to Access Services at any Location:
- ***This was a highly emphasized theme.***
- *Library*
- *Work BC*
- *Welfare office*
- *Schools*
- *Band offices*
- *Health Care Facilities*
- *MY House [a local youth drop-in centre]*

Simplicity and Consistency in Communications:
- *Simplified government websites and directories*
- ***Consistency*** *[in communication]*
- ***Update these regularly***

Use our Schools:
- *Have parenting classes that are accessible to all.*
- *Our schools should run like a community.*
- *Need someone to facilitate [community schools].*
- *Teach our students how to be effective self-advocates.*
- *Teach everyone to ask questions.*
- ***People who have experience poverty can share their story with students and in other gathering places.***

Upskill Staff and Use Volunteers:
- ***This was a highly emphasized theme.***
- *Teach question-asking to staff [in helping agencies]*
- ***Use volunteer navigators*** *(perhaps people who have been through the system in the past)*

- *Use a mentorship program*
- *Peer-to-peer connections.*
- *Someone with lived experience can help others by sharing their story and speaking to people.*

Use "Hubs":
- *This was a highly emphasized theme.*
- *A hub where people come together & support with what they have and what they need.*
- *Use mentors and volunteers in these hubs.*

4. People need to be treated with more dignity and less bureaucracy when they seek help.

Simplify Processes & Forms:
- *This was a highly emphasized theme.*
- *Use simple checklists [on forms]*
- *Simplify questions and forms*
- *Provide services that help with forms*
- *More one-on-one services*
- *[Ensure] people-oriented services by training people that help people*
- *More sensitivity training*
- *[Emphasize] empathy [in training and performance.*
- Train and assign *advocates* to help people through the system
- *Assign people a 'familiar face" within an organization.*
- *Let people tell their story without judgment, assumptions [or interruptions].*
- *Make it easier to access services*

Coordinate Services:
- *Coordinate the way services work together*
- *Use a case management approach (i.e. one person connects a team of people)*
- *Have consistency in the way staff/agencies report*
- *Simplify forms*

Recognize the Role of Trauma:
- People can be reluctant to access/return to services because of traumatic experiences there, such as:
  - *Discomfort in shelters*
  - *Exposure to drug use*
  - *[Witnessing or experiencing] violence*

- *Ensure the environment is safe and looks safe*
- *Ensure safety over the long-term*

Support & Educate People to Self-advocate:
- *Use people with similar backgrounds (e.g. immigrants) to help in this.*
- *Hire refugees [because they have experience]*

Build Trust and Relationships
- *Introduce people personally to new staff*
- *Don't give people a number*
- *Emphasize communication*
- **Use mentors and people with lived experience as advocates**
- *Use unpaid volunteers to help*
- *Services based on love; supportive and emotional care*

5. Our system needs to focus on giving a "hand-up" rather than a "hand-out."

Teach Life Skills:
- ***This was a highly emphasized theme.***
- **Budgeting**
- **Financial skills**
- *Cooking*
- **Meal planning**
- *How to shop for groceries/save money*
- **Include this in school curriculum**
- **Teach it at an earlier age**

Teach Occupational Skills
- **[Help people] find their gift**
- *Build on their [current] skills*

More Adult Literacy Programs:
- *Training to read and write*

Teach people how to access services:
- **Teach in schools**
- *Teach in churches and community kitchens*

Teach how to help others
- ***This was a highly emphasized theme.***

Teach during important transitions:

- ***Use community elders and cultural groups to help teach to young people. (Highly emphasized theme.)***
- *This is especially important for youth about to "age out" of the system.*
- *Provide education for aging people*

Provide incentives and supports for people trying to get ahead:

- ***This was a highly emphasized theme.***
- *Provide free childcare*
- *Give incentives to people who are learning life skills [taking courses] or getting a job*

"Some people are happy where they are."

- *We cannot change it [poverty][for everyone]*
- *Give energy to people who want to change*

Provide Encouragement:

- ***Consider and support emotional well-being in services. (Highly emphasized theme.)***
- ***Genuinely accept people***
- *[Make them feel] "You can do it!"*
- *Use mentors*
- *Show them role models*
- ***Be nonjudgmental***
- ***Make sure the services feel safe***

Work in Partnerships/Teams:

- *Have people work as partners*
- *Partner with businesses*
- *Partner with local government*
- ***Build small supportive communities where people can help each other. (Highly emphasized theme.)***
- ***More Community Forums (Highly emphasized theme.)***
  - *More workshops like this one*
  - *Invite frontline workers to events like this one so they are not a barrier*

Part 3: Mission Poverty Reduction Forum
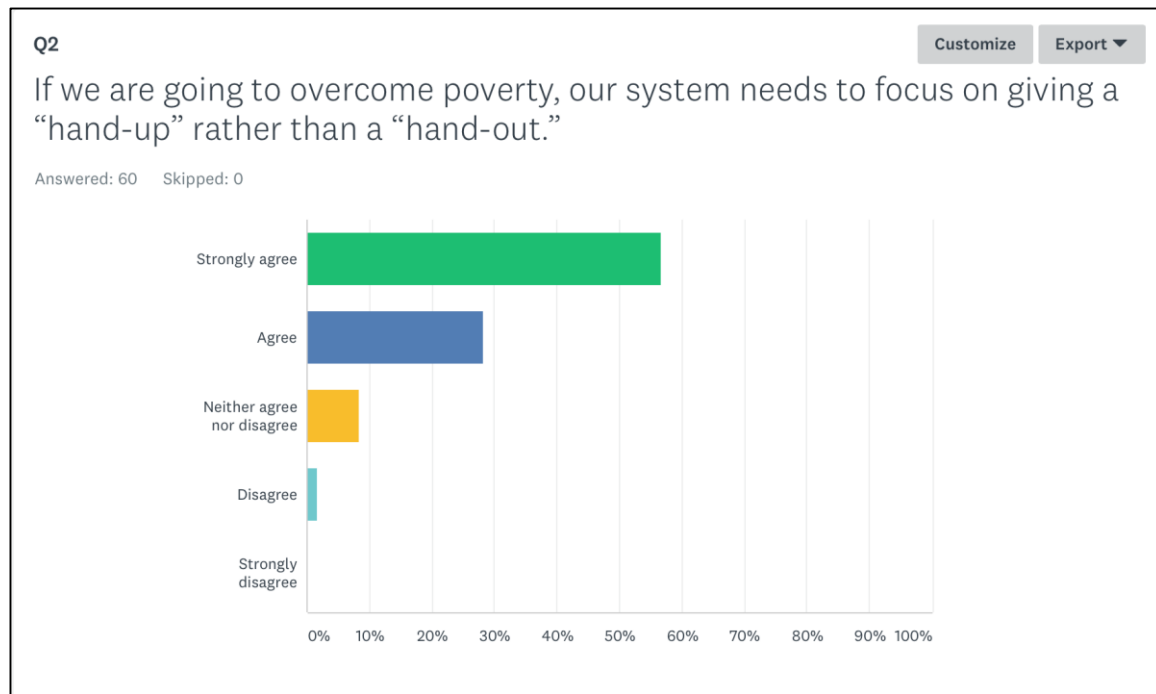## *Survey Responses*

Survey Dates: 9 March – 17 March 2018-03-17
Total Respondents: 60

Q1: In your own words, what do you think keeps people in poverty?

Systemic discrimination and the cost of living.
Mental health issues, lack of educational opportunities, poor access to social supports / affordable childcare. I believe strongly that these three issues are linked to experiences in an individual's preschool years and that if we want a healthy strong community and economy we must invest in our young people.
Depression due to circumstances they are in, followed by lack of confidence and lack of drive to correct the situation. Assuming there are no drugs or mental issues involved.
Depression due to circumstances they are in, followed by lack of confidence and lack of drive to correct the situation. Assuming there are no drugs or mental issues involved.
Systemic inequities
People can't or don't know how to access the services and support available to them. Or those services and support don't fit their needs or don't exist.
Debt, taxes, lack of jobs, lack of housing, lack of government support at all levels, insane real estate prices, gender disparity in the pay scale
Addiction, mental illness, society
Systematic oppression from multiple aspects in life: Lack of affordable housing. Lack of respectable employment. Lack of aid for dealing with trauma from someone's past which gives them low self esteem. Lack of a support network of family/friends. Rising prices of healthy food, of gas, of car insurance, of daycare, of medication. Lack of hope that things will ever change.
The high cost of living and the minimal possible payout. This is especially severe in the Fraser valley
Cost of living
A lack of knowledge of the social and economic forces that create and perpetuate poverty.
Increase of living expenses and jobs not adapting
Finances cost of living low wages no job security
Lack of opportunity. We need more free educational opportunities, daycare.
High rent, cost of living
Generational expectations
A sense of hopelessness.
No one reason. Examples could be: fixed income vs rising cost of living; lack of employable skills; crippling substance addiction; mental health issues; being " house poor"; lack of support structures; medical impediments; overwhelming family obligations; debt burden; not knowing how to access assistance; pride (not wanting anyone to know); victimization.
Racism, lack of opportunities, lack of money, housing, food insecurity
Lack of self worth, lack of truth and knowledge about resources, lack of hope and/or faith, fear of change, fear of reaching out. Fear, period.
Lack of resources and education
Past trauma
Loss of a feeling of self worth
It depends on each persons situation

Low paying jobs compared to high price of housing, gas, living in general intergenerational trauma/growing up in poverty
Mental health, high cost of rent, high cost of education preventing many people from being able to get better jobs
Housing/rental costs, excessive rise in cost of living without the equal increase in wages.
Drugs Bad Choices Expensive Housing
Lack of supports such as affordable housing, transportation etc.
Depends on the person, for many it's mental health and lack of enough resources to support all those who truly cannot work and/are older, addiction issues and some are just pure lazy.
Cycle of poverty, lack of self-esteem, confidence, lack of motivation, having a mental illness.
Sometimes unable to make rent as well as groceries, transportation, bills, etc. Sometimes drug or alcohol abuse takes priority.
Not enough to live on income and jobs and relationships
Many things, but basically it's like a maze that is hard to escape.
A cycle of a lack of personal assets, supports and mentors; systemic bias that keeps people from moving out of poverty; and sometimes a lack of knowledge/ability to put together the steps that it takes to make changes needed.
Lack of resources
▪Economy ▪Laziness/Lack of Drive/Poor Attitude/Poor Me -Woe Me Syndrome ▪Addictions ▪Being enabled which disenables people Lack of Education etc.
Lack of education
A combination of lack of education, poor financial management, entry level employment with few opportunities for training or advancement, undiagnosed or difficult medical conditions, past trauma
Lack of well paid jobs. Increasing food costs. Lack education/skills for the current market place. And most definitely rising housing costs
A combination of things. Homelessness: Lack of resources for addiction treatment and counselling. Little in the way of transition houses, providing job training and life skills. A lack of knowledge from the general public regarding the homeless population. Low Income: Lack of a living wage in our country's most expensive province. Lack of affordable housing. A disability system that is inefficient and ineffective. An inefficient transit system for those seeking employment outside of their hometown.
Mental illness and addiction and the inability of getting them to help
Not being educated
A lack of healthy relationships, a shortage of affordable housing and not enough supported, accessible entry level jobs
Our society has a system where the people of the higher income brackets have more possibilities to use ways to use deductions and loopholes in order to keep their money, whereas a person with lower income usually isn't afforded the same benefits. I have tried to write this several times and this is the best way I could put it except to say "the rich get richer and the poor get poorer."
Past traumas, disabilities and road blocks to good employment, not enough access to education and high housing and transportation costs. Life is very competitive and discriminatory.
Lack of education and skills
Problems with mental health and lack of resources, poor education and access to it, being raised in poverty.
Lack of mental health help and not enough resources
Addictions, mental health challenges & bad choices made during developmental years. Poor adult role models.

Q2: If we are going to overcome poverty, our system needs to focus on giving a "hand-up" rather than a "hand-out."
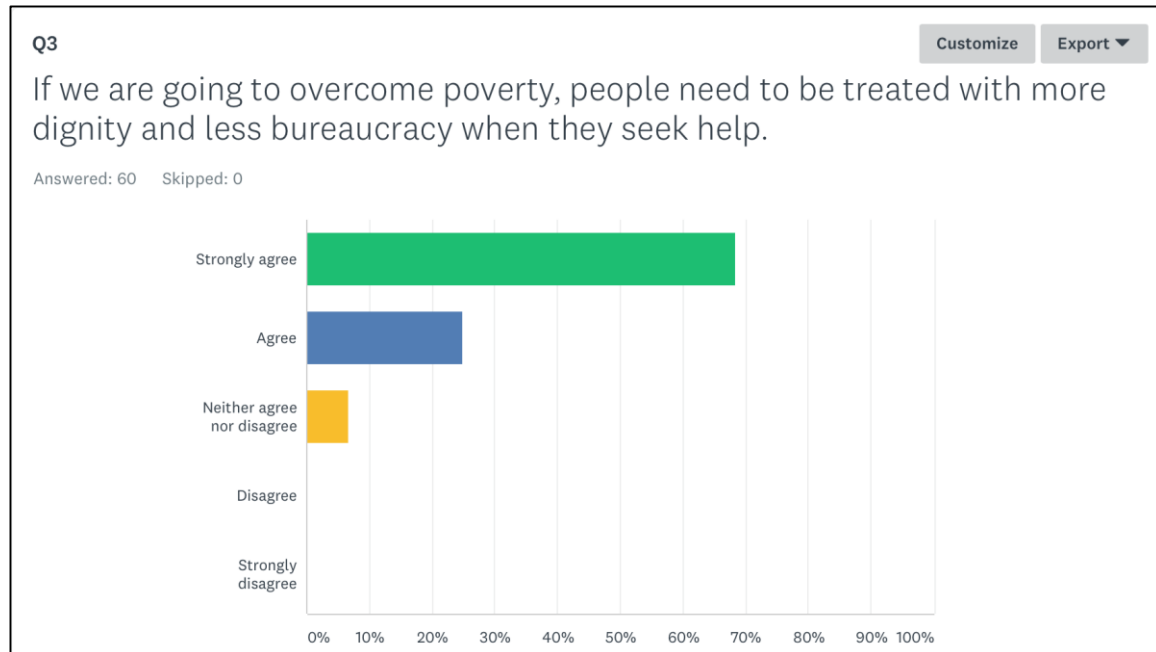
Q2

If we are going to overcome poverty, our system needs to focus on giving a "hand-up" rather than a "hand-out."

Answered: 60   Skipped: 0

Strongly agree	56.67% 34
Agree	28.33% 17
Neither agree nor disagree	8.33% 5
Disagree	1.67% 1
Strongly disagree	0.00% 0
Comment only	6.67% 4
TOTAL	60

Comments:

By providing education, resources, supports, and skills training. Focusing on what they can contribute back to the community and supporting them in that.
Pressure our provincial government to allow parents who are collecting financial assistance to attend training / upgrading schools, increase access to mental health care and provide low cost quality childcare.
Giving a hand up should be done in a non-judgemental way and start them on the path of recovering their self-confidence and self worth.
Giving a hand up should be done in a non-judgemental way and start them on the path of recovering their self-confidence and self worth.
False dichotomy. Defeating poverty will involve both

Our system needs to do both. Equally.
Provide continuity with care for addiction / mental illness. Provide purpose through contribution…pride in caring for own home
Regulation on rental prices would be the most important, units are being rented for the maximum most unreal prices Stock the low income food programs with food that isn't rotten or purely processed Also keep in mind diet effects brain health and those living in poverty already have complicated brain chemistry and high sugar high sodium diets only increase negative symptoms
Provide more low cost assisted living
Increased access to education Financial support for education Financial Literacy Psychosocial supports
Lower the cost of housing Raise the wages for people to be able to afford the cost of living
I think there are times for both
Talking with the homeless and really listening and understanding. Trying to point them in the right direction and actually physically helping them to get there, e.g. take them out to appointments, counsellors, etc. Even just taking them out for dinner or to a movie or hairdresser…something to make them feel good.
Access to family counselling; job training; financial education; access to mental health services and rehab resources are examples. Federal and Provincial government should look at a guaranteed income program to replace the plethora of social assistance payments. Local governments should stop confusing home ownership with wealth. All levels of government need to define " poverty " and " affordability " as all are talking past one another to solve an undefined problem based on individual observations.
You meet people at their point of need, ask them what they need, Peer support. Meaningful opportunities to contribute etc.
Yes. With love and respect.
Create opportunities for engagement with proper supports in place
It begins with giving people a chance to return to being a part of the community
Affordable housing enforce child support payments affordable childcare living wages
Services in BC are by choice only however those that are able to work should be required to attend addiction services etc. in order to be able to receive welfare
Create more supports
More ways to educate people by funding Poverty Reduction program on all municipalities.
First find out who is making an effort to make ends meet/ do for themselves. See what could assist them in their goals of managing everything. Not everyone wants to change/better their situation.
Yes needing be affordable income earn and to housing other one
I think we need both coming from the needs of the individual.
Early focussed healthy attention on our youth during their developmental year

Q3: If we are going to overcome poverty, people need to be treated with more dignity and less bureaucracy when they seek help.
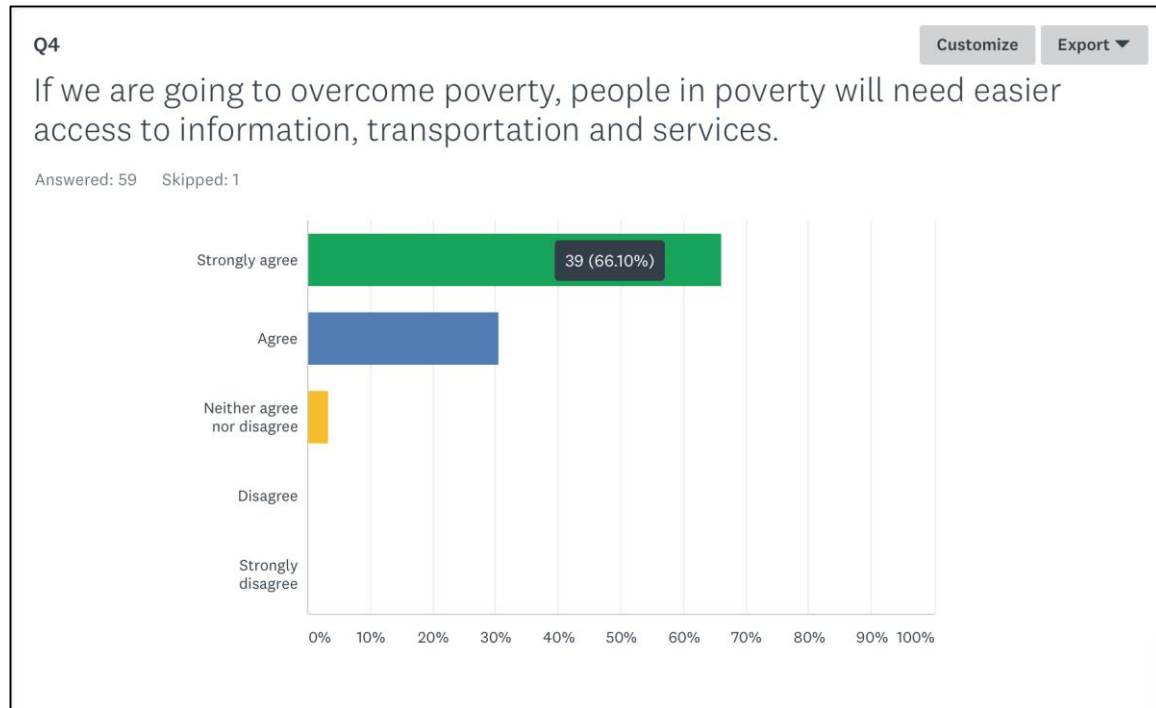
Q3

If we are going to overcome poverty, people need to be treated with more dignity and less bureaucracy when they seek help.

Answered: 60   Skipped: 0

Strongly agree	68.33% 41
Agree	25.00% 15
Neither agree nor disagree	6.67% 4
Disagree	0.00% 0
Strongly disagree	0.00% 0
TOTAL	60

Comments:

People should be treated as people, not another statistic or number. Bureaucracy tends to dehumanize which is not how poverty should be approached, as it is a people problem.
In each community we should have social worker advocates" who assist people to navigate the system and access support
Create programs that allow flexibility and personal contact.
Create programs that allow flexibility and personal contact.
Need to create continuity in care. Have case worker to help navigate system
Eliminate the stigma, normalize helping those who need it
Peer to peer support programs Trauma-informed practice at the organizational an individual levels
Unsure, the prejudice against the poor is very ingrained in our society.
Its not that black and white…
Act on their needs…. as quickly as possible. If they need something then you must do something to help them acquire that need. It needs to be acted on quickly rather than just talking about it.

We need to stop categorizing people and deal with individual cases -- drop the stigmas. There is need to use all of our collective expertise in each situation and not have people directed from agency to agency -- lets centralize our resources and use system navigators to help with access.
Use peer support, have good people who are the first point of contact. Cut through the red tape.
With love and respect
We need to reduce Barrie's that limit impoverished peoples to come forward and feel comfortable in using resources
The waitlists to access detox and or treatment are incredibly long creating a huge barrier for those seeking help
Centralize all the services in the municipal level.
People who believe this statement first and foremost to do the interviews/client outreach. Not someone who is just there for a paycheck or a stepping stone for themselves.
We'd get much more for our money if we actually helped people feel supported and if we genuinely helped them through the process of improving their lives
Stop enabling which disenables. Those people need to need & want change & growth in there life & it takes hard work continued education & to be both sound in mind/body. Etc. etc.
Making sure agencies are linked and employees of all agencies know how to direct people to the right resources
Provide the basics of life - safe shelter, healthy food, a basic bank account and training on how to save and spend. Combine this with skills training, counselling and social opportunities. An eco village type setting is an example.
While I agree that those asking the government, and therefore taxpayers, for financial help must be properly screened, I do believe the process can be done without belittling or demeaning the applicant.
If people are treated with dignity they will eventually rise to a place of responding with dignity. Patience will be required, because it will take time for that to happen.
We need to engage these people and get them involved in helping solve their situation. Listening would be a huge first step. We like to pat ourselves on the back because we provide homeless shelters, however, we tend to ignore their comments regarding the lack of privacy and safety due to being housed in warehouse type situations. We also tend to believe they don't deserve to have their own "family" members and won't allow them to keep their animals with them.
Agency and government staff at all levels need to be better trained in this area. One would expect in any and areas of service.
Stop claw back when a person makes extra income,
Simply saying hello and smiling to homeless people, more boots on the ground (nurses, social workers), immediate access to detox and housing.
Treating everybody and their stories with respect is a good start

Q4: If we are going to overcome poverty, people in poverty will need easier access to information, transportation and services.

Q4

If we are going to overcome poverty, people in poverty will need easier access to information, transportation and services.

Answered: 59   Skipped: 1

Strongly agree	66.10% 39
Agree	30.51% 18
Neither agree nor disagree	3.39% 2
Disagree	0.00% 0
Strongly disagree	0.00% 0
TOTAL	59

Comments:

See above. Social workers should not be in a building or an office. They should be in the community supporting those in need. Of course that will entail hiring more of them, I know
Through joint efforts by Municipal, Provincial and Federal programs.
Through joint efforts by Municipal, Provincial and Federal programs.
A low income bus pass program would be great (not just families or those with disabilities, but for those who simply can't afford a bus pass) More public advertising about the resources already available
We need a large core of people who are willing to help to provide this service.
See #3. Again, a centralized system rather than a disjointed array of government and non-profit agencies is necessary. A coordination, and perhaps an amalgamation, of all levels of government services is required. We cannot continue to piece-meal solutions to an ill-defined problem and expect successful results. We need to end "turf " wars between all levels of care giving.

Peer support. Asking people what they need meeting them at their point of need, not assuming that you know what they need.
And willingness
Detox beds are often in other communities and need to be contacted daily for someone living on the street seeking help this is not always realistic, also transition house beds are minimal and often have waits or are at capacity
Access currently isn't the issue in my mind, it's the amount of resources we're lacking. There are plenty of feeding programs, clothing programs, etc. going on at a community level, but they are underfunded, depend on volunteers and they are there because they're filling a gap the government resources have left behind, which are also underfunded and understaffed. We don't need to reinvent the wheel with new programs, we need to support and fund and sometimes as just the existing programs so they function better.
More funding or more community involvement.
Making it easier for people to get bus passed or a way for working individuals with a vehicle to have help with car insurance. Different hours for services for individuals who work 9-5.
People need to be a bit more resourceful sometimes, but the system is really, really confusing and frustrating for almost everyone.
Services need to be onsite and available at different times of day (daytime/ evening) where vulnerable persons are residing for easier, consistent access. Transportation vouchers for getting to work or training.
Expand the West Coast Express hours to include weekends. Offer more efficient bus schedules. Expand the sky train to the Fraser Valley. Allow for 24-hour service in Vancouver.
Shared resourcing (i.e. MY House) is a way to provide more services/resources with less money and organizational infrastructure.
A system could be set up in a service agency where people in poverty could have access to the information and services available. They need to be made aware of agencies which can help walk them through the process of applying for funding, looking for housing, help find ways to conquer their addictions, provide the much needed supplement of healthy meals. Provide access to health care with health are professionals who are not their family "health care worker" etc.
Political will not just for business or profit margins. People matter first. Some level socialism needs to be recognized to do not his.
Places like M.Y. House for the youth us a great start. But where are the adults to go?
Ensure positive human support resources & adequate financial back up is available,
Stop overspending on useless programs, government workers & sending Justin on family vacations
Have everything for them in one area
We need more affordable housing over any of these priorities (co ops, subsidized housing, assisted living, group homes, micro housing).
Buss tickets

Q5: If we are going to overcome poverty, our social services, health and education systems need to do a better job of assessing and responding to people as individuals.

Customize   Export ▼

if we are going to overcome poverty, our social services, health
and education systems need to do a better job of assessing and responding
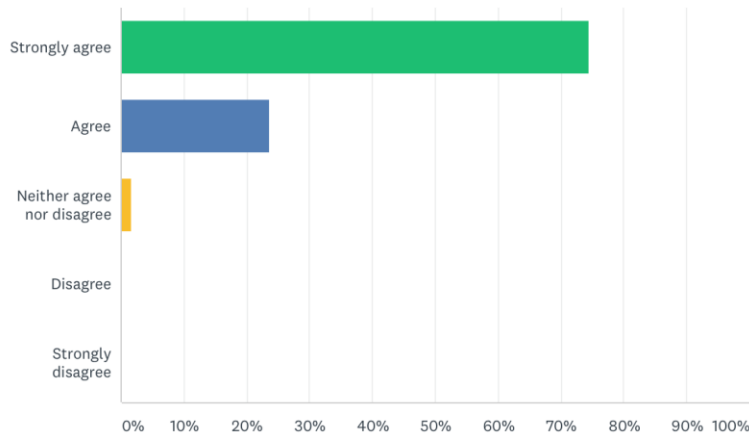to people as individuals.

Answered: 59   Skipped: 1

Strongly agree	74.58% 44
Agree	23.73% 14
Neither agree nor disagree	1.69% 1
Disagree	0.00% 0
Strongly disagree	0.00% 0
TOTAL	59

Comments:

Stigmas must be removed!
Lessen the case loads of these individuals so that they can form relationships with those they are supporting
No, I am not in any of those fields.
No, I am not in any of those fields.
As individuals but also as members of families and communities
Have a caseworker to work in partnership with individuals to navigate system
In my personal experience, doctors need to take patients seriously. Not comparing them to others
Trust and relationship are key
Stop labeling people

See #3. Part of the education plan should be to ensure that those being assisted realize that they are part of the solution and nor the problem. Just as they wish to receive respect and understanding, they need to show respect and participation.
Meeting people at their point of need. Everyone's challenges etc. ate different. Peer support.
Showing that we loved helps us to want to change, in my experience
We need to engage where they are at. Not talk down to those in need.
More funding to all agencies and systems
The only way that will happen is with money. Hire more staff, train them better, it all takes money. The need will always surpass the services because as more services become available, more people with needs will come forward for help. We need to think of creative ways to not just identify the needs, identifying them early would help, but we need to have timely ways to resolve them quickly so they are not supported by the system for years and years. Quick resolutions may free up some money to put into earlier identification.
Hire more workers who have gone through a poverty education course & did community services volunteer hours.
There's no other system where we think everyone is the same. We waste a ton of resources by taking one-size fits all approach.
As someone who is being pressed by my doctor to go on disability, I can say that our current system is severely flawed! I have to quit my job and go on income assistance before I can apply for disability. This seems counterintuitive considering I can still work up to a certain amount while on disability, so why should I have to go on welfare while waiting to be approved? It makes NO sense!
The systems need to stop basing how they provide services on the average person and need to start individualizing them. Each person is different and these differences need to be considered and taken into consideration. Services need to start out standardized and tailored to meet the needs of the people they are trying to help.
Just as it says.
Again we need to stop treating poverty as some kind of sickness
More funding
Strong community support systems with adequate financial back up.
100% stated above. Don't group them all in same group as having same issues...reach out and address them individually.
People need to work as a team and include family members, not just the individual that is affected...unfortunately once people become adults, family members no longer are able to help them without the person's permission.
Our services need to cut down on their bureaucracy and think strategically long term. Many employees try to help but get burned out supporting out if date and broken systems.
No judgment

Q6: If we are going to overcome poverty, people need supports and skills to help them build resilience so that they are not overwhelmed by life's challenges.
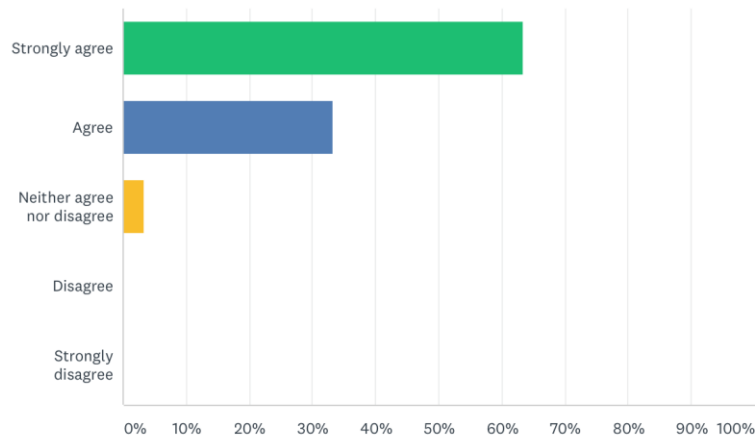
If we are going to overcome poverty, people need supports and skills to help them build resilience so that they are not overwhelmed by life's challenges.

Answered: 60   Skipped: 0

Strongly agree	63.33% 38
Agree	33.33% 20
Neither agree nor disagree	3.33% 2
Disagree	0.00% 0
Strongly disagree	0.00% 0
TOTAL	60

Comments:

Job training, counselling
Community can start be setting an example to be followed.
When they acquire the support to learn a new skill they need someone to help them succeed. That person would need to follow up, with them, on a daily basis (initially) and then gradually follow up only weekly, etc. until that support person was confident enough to 'let go'.
See #3. The use of " life coaches " should be included in the process. We need to recognize that there is no one size fits all answer and that there is a need tor both short term and long term assistance programs.
Peer support. Etc. that is what we do with LINC. Positive role models. Basic needs met always helps with resilience.
Not only provide things like meals, show them how to cook.
Better teaching of life skills at a younger age

I'm not so sure the government or community programs are or will ever be equipped to basically life coach people into wellness. That's a huge undertaking. Perhaps there should be parenting classes offered to equip parents to instill these skills in their kids as a pre-emptive measure instead, it should be coming from them and will stick better coming from them anyway.

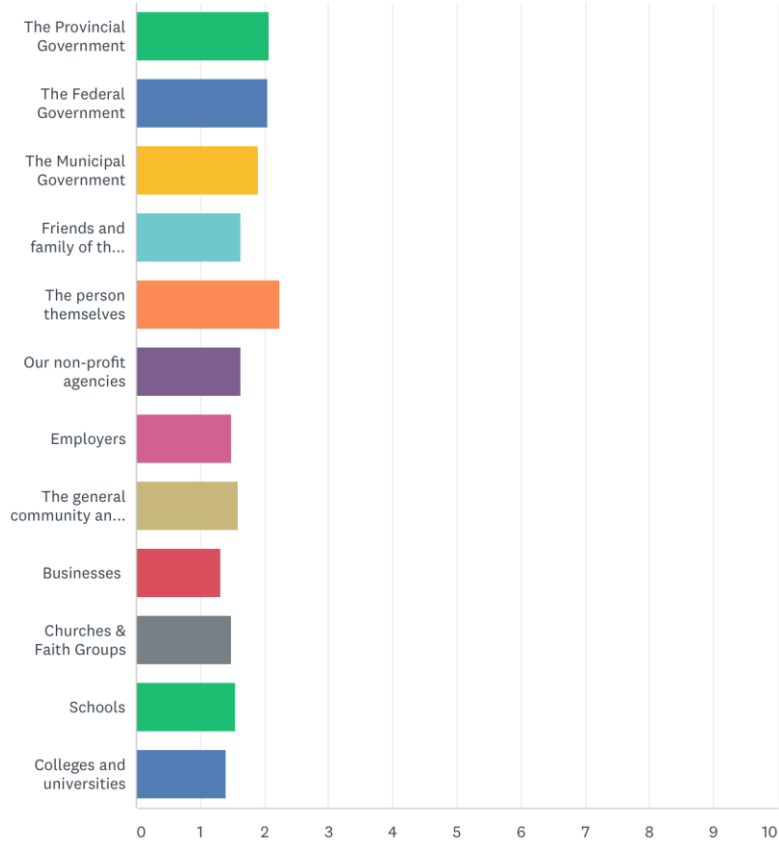## Q7: If I could make one suggestion about how to reduce poverty in our system, it would be…

Make education free!
Support young families and preschool children to grow into healthy adults
A stronger participation by our communities and our governments to make this work and to provide the necessary services and programs.
Have a poverty action plan
Living wages/reduced housing costs.
Equity over equality
Make access to services easier, create more affordable / usable public transportation
Help people feel proud of themselves. Through a respectable job, some money in the bank, some clean clothes, a safe place to sleep. Most of the homeless I see in Mission are middle-aged men. They aren't going to want to work at Tim Hortons for minimum wage. They need skills and job they can be proud of. More mill work, more construction jobs etc.
Implementing a municipal rent regulation. A set of rules to be followed when setting a rental price on a unit.
More low cost housing
Not having people jump through hoops to get help, this discourages people and shamed them for where they are
We need to have more affordable housing.
Affordable housing
Addressing the issue early in childhood education and education and follow up training for families that are struggling.
Communication, on all levels - with homeless individuals and with the general public to create awareness.
Everybody, government and agencies, get together and define the issues then be creative in determining feasible solutions with those in need are the focal point.
Redistribute wealth. Make sure everyone has basic needs met i.e. housing, food employment Equal access to opportunities. Make systems in place culturally etc. represented of client group. Get rid of the inherent racism that exists
Showing love and support to each person. Unconditionally
Need to become legislative astute and provide measures that protect those in poverty from the non-compassionate in our community.
Invest in developing emotional regulation and emotional intelligence, especially in early years and school programs. Provide free outreach/counselling that meets people where they are at. Create greater childcare subsidies for low-income workers.
Address the housing issues
Again, it would depend on each persons situation
Affordable housing - trickle down effect from Vancouver - foreign buyers, etc. having a huge impact here
Educate early
Affordable housing
Everyone needs to take part in this and do what they can, whether it's small or large measures. We all have the capacity to make an impact somehow. This is not a Mission problem, or a rich vs. poor problem, or a well vs. healthy problem, or an addict vs. not problem, as people like to separate themselves from "those

people" who are the "problem". This is a humanity problem and we all played a part in creating it, we should all be participating in resolving it.
More awareness through Poverty Reduction Program.
Good vouchers, job bus for low income people to subscribe to get to work more efficiently (similar to the Handidart system for individuals with disabilities)
Have a affordable basic living that able live off of
Assess people better and helped them navigate the system.
Provide better resources. Not just the basics like food and shelter. We have a diverse community that has diverse needs.
Fairness & Affordable Education etc.
Being a part of a community that is empathetic and treats each individual as a unique person. Developing and enhancing services that meet a person where they are while also encouraging and supporting each individual to make life choices that will lead out of poverty.
Identify the marginal individuals and families and get them assistance before they lose fundamentals. Change rules which will allow low income earners to purchase and retain assets.
Increase funding for community support workers who can be mandated to do the initial fact-finding!
More affordable living costs and better preparation of our youth for the real world.
Out reach
Free education
If we can reduce poverty amongst the children and youth of our community it will result in less adult poverty in the future.
For our government to stop penalizing the people on assistance when they wish to try to improve themselves. In the same vein, for the access of people who are in need of help to have access to it immediately instead of making them wait for an extended period of time and insisting they meet a specific set of criteria before they can receive the help.
People matter. Resources at all levels where they can get support and education to help themselves not just time limited and a hand out. Some kind of laddering structure, like second stage housing with shelter and counselling, moving into life skills, education, skills training and stable housing.
Make more low cost housing opportunities available.
Less red tape.
Small action steps. Ones that everybody can participate in. then helping becomes more manageable
Early childhood and parental guidance!
More money needs to be spent and smart people need to implement the changes
Education and health care
Unless on disability, have people do something to earn a portion of their income assistance cheque as it would instill pride as well as give experience for a resume
Bring about more affordable housing strategies such as co-ops. Currently we only have 2 in our town and only one is open to families. Our shelter does not have enough beds for the amount of homeless in our town.
To have professionals go out and meet one-on-one or with groups of people that are in poverty to build understanding and relationships
More volunteers

Q8: When it comes to overcoming poverty, the responsibility lies with…

When it comes to overcoming poverty, the responsibility lies with…

Answered: 60   Skipped: 0

	NOT RESPONSIBLE AT ALL–	A LITTLE RESPONSIBLE–	VERY RESPONSIBLE–	MOSTLY RESPONSIBLE–	TOTAL–	WEIGHTED AVERAGE–
Provincial Government	0.00% 0	11.86% 7	**69.49%** **41**	18.64% 11	59	**2.07**
Federal Government	0.00% 0	13.56% 8	**67.80%** **40**	18.64% 11	59	**2.05**
Municipal Government	0.00% 0	22.03% 13	**66.10%** **39**	11.86% 7	59	**1.90**
Friends & family of the person in poverty	3.33% 2	**41.67%** **25**	**43.33%** **26**	11.67% 7	60	**1.63**
The person themselves	1.67% 1	6.67% 4	**58.33%** **35**	33.33% 20	60	**2.23**

	NOT RESPONSIBLE AT ALL–	A LITTLE RESPONSIBLE–	VERY RESPONSIBLE–	MOSTLY RESPONSIBLE–	TOTAL–	WEIGHTED AVERAGE–
Our non-profit agencies	3.51% 2	36.84% 21	**52.63%** **30**	7.02% 4	57	**1.63**
Employers	3.39% 2	**49.15%** **29**	42.37% 25	5.08% 3	59	**1.49**
General community and neighbours	5.00% 3	40.00% 24	**46.67%** **28**	8.33% 5	60	**1.58**
Businesses	10.17% 6	**52.54%** **31**	33.90% 20	3.39% 2	59	**1.31**
Churches & Faith Groups	6.78% 4	**44.07%** **26**	**42.37%** **25**	6.78% 4	59	**1.49**
Schools	5.08% 3	**42.37%** **25**	**45.76%** **27**	6.78% 4	59	**1.54**
Colleges and Universities	8.62% 5	**48.28%** **28**	36.21% 21	6.90% 4	58	**1.41**

Comments:

Poverty is a community problem and should not be ignored. If you aren't part of the problem please be part of the solutions
No one person or agency holds total responsibility. It is a societal issue.
Everyone
Health care too

Q9: How optimistic are you that we can reduce poverty in the long term in our community?
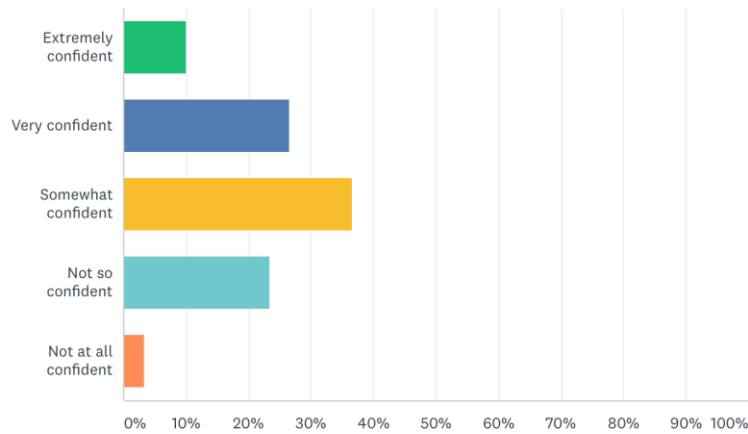
Q9 Customize Export ▼

How optimistic are you that we can reduce poverty in the long term in our community?

Answered: 60   Skipped: 0

Extremely confident	10.00% 6
Very confident	26.67% 16
Somewhat confident	36.67% 22
Not so confident	23.33% 14
Not at all confident	3.33% 2
TOTAL	60

Comments:

I do not believe that politicians will help young children as they should unless three year olds are given the right to vote. Similarly many individuals with mental illness do not vote. Sadly I don't believe there is a sincere "will" on the part of those with the most power to make these changes.
I think the problem is very complicated and exceeds the capacity of one community. It takes the buy in of everybody and that is not an easy thing to accomplish. We have to keep trying, but th3 need seems to be growing, not diminishing.
I think the problem is very complicated and exceeds the capacity of one community. It takes the buy in of everybody and that is not an easy thing to accomplish. We have to keep trying, but th3 need seems to be growing, not diminishing.
If we make it a priority I believe poverty can be reduced.
cost of everything is going up - housing, food, education. At the same time, wages are not increasing.
Tough issues

Not with the way things are currently going with out of control housing prices, crippling high rental prices, high gas and food. And the cost just keeps going up and up. If middle income earners are feeling the strain, how are those in poverty going to cope?
I live beneath the poverty line, I'm hungry as I fill out this survey. I have tried to help offer change but no one takes me seriously. I have faith one day it will be sorted but I don't know if I'll be alive to witness it
It takes commitment from everyone and not everyone is on board...
There are too many people in the community that are actually scared of the homeless so they just look the other way and avoid contact.
Many individuals, levels of government and agencies are beginning to talk to one another and recognize problems are larger than any one of them. Hopefully, talking will lead to cooperation which will lead to coordination which will lead to holistic approaches.
Not at 10pm at night lol. People working together, listening, the public will to change etc.
All things Are possible with God
I think the changing in the economic landscape has raised the profile of those moving out of the middle class into a newer less able to afford class of citizen. As more people struggle to survive there is greater dialogue and understanding. I believe this can lead to positive change in attitudes and government legislation.
Cost of living, housing and gas prices increasing, I don't see this trend changing in near future and it is scary. Cost of living is rising way faster than incomes - too disproportional, more people ending up in poverty
Continued rising costs without the rise in income for middle class working families.
It's a team effort but it also is a Person s Choice as well!!.
Mission is a community of giving, caring people, I've seen it over and over again. But they need a program to follow, a central system to buy into and support. There are tons of little programs here and there and Mission residents and businesses support all of them. If there was a large community initiative that everyone could pool their resources and get behind, I think it would have a huge impact, find huge support, and have a lasting effect.
Population is growing and will continue to grow, and a good portion of that is through immigration. Requiring every new immigrant to attend poverty education workshops to encourage volunteerism and engagement to their local community.
If greedy people would stop attaining power positions/the system stopped allowing government to be so well paid and money went back into the public/running of the a)country, b)province, and c) municipalities!!
reason is all stops at cost before anything gets done on this important issue in our society poverty is huge with most expensive place to live in is BC until politicians are in poverty all levels reality check see why stop cause cost of things for any level of govt to fix poverty say it but don't do it
We are evolving as a society, but progress is slow. We need to get beyond selfishness. We need - all of us - to be brave and bold.
More of hope than confidence. But still optimism
We just need people in office who care more about their constituents than padding their pockets.
Rental, child care and education subsidy need to change
Stone Soup, MY House, Hope Central, MFC etc. are a good start. We need to find creative and affordable ways to do more.
It will take a shift in perception on the part of government and people who have money. They will have to stop looking at people who are low income as deserving of their place and start looking at the situation in terms of how they can help to make a difference in the lives of other people less fortunate than them.
We need all the players involved in# 8.
It doesn't seem to be made a priority. Also the problem is huge...perhaps too big to change
You need a task force to deal with the problem
I'm so disillusioned by the red tape involved in everything and the lack of proper mental health services for people needing them.....6 weeks and you're miraculously cured, or you try to commit suicide and they tell you there's nothing wrong...I'm speaking from experience...

I think poverty could be reduced but I am skeptical that our town will make much of an impact on the problem in the next decade. I think that we need to be more progressive as a community.
We keep working together, anything is possible

Q10: Any other thoughts or ideas we might have missed?

No
Good survey!
Rob from the rich to give to the poor. Tap into this massive influx of "outside" money (housing speculators, international ownership, shell companies) and tax this money for the people who actually live in this community but who are being strangled by it financially.
Meet the people who need extra supports where they are in their life. Then build on those extra needs with the individuals on a level that is flexible and easily understood. More Outreach Workers, Homeless Prevention Programs, Social Workers, Low Cost Housing. With the Federal Government's financial supports providing provinces with the funds to assist communities
Low income housing, more detox and treatment centres
Renting process and subsidy for disables individuals
The cost of supporting those on disability...including, mental health and brain injury
Probably!!!!!
Not that I can think of.
Not at this time
People who live in poverty all have different situations and should be treated as such.
Cheaper Housing around Mission more places and People that help the drug Issues too!
Yes BC govt need to increase benefits for all so help with poverty
Focus on education!!!
Nope. Thanks for a good survey. Keep up the good work
Thanks for doing this survey and all the other work that Stone Soup does.
A whole different Governmental approach. I like the NDP, socialistic philosophy by they are working in a capitalist structure and there is much opposition or the structure doesn't support the needs like universal childcare. Don't just throw the money out to there to individual people or agencies. Real resources need to be developed like government funded group daycares with subsidized spaces. This approach needs to change all levels. If Contractors want to be approved for housing developments they need to allocate and forego a percentage to low income housing for people who need it. Everyone should have affordable housing based on their income i.e.) 30%. There should be accessible and affordable skills training, bring back apprenticeships and award business to do so. Develop easy and accessible transportation systems not ones that make people more disadvantaged and an obstacle to get to school and work. Treat people like a resource base to improve our society.
That there be a level put on very persons wages over so much to be used in the community where it is raised.
Appreciate your leadership!
Have a one stop ?? area for the people. Where they can get all the help in one area and also have housing as well with doctors nurses paramedics Counsellors And drug rehabilitation centre near by. In area like the industrial where you can build a whole new facility for the people. River view will soon be a great place for the people. They have building in place and new Building coming soon.
Holding events like the one that will be happening on Monday is a great way to educate and inform. I would like to see and hear about more of events like these in Mission