Poverty in Vermont

What We Know and What We Don’t Know
Research Goals

1. Determine a Profile of people living in Deep Poverty in Vermont
2. Determine how these unique characteristics of Vermont would effect programs designed to alleviate poverty
Data Sources

• Nationwide survey Data:
  – American Community Survey and The Annual Social and Economic Supplement of the Census

• Government Benefit Data
  – TANF, 3squares Vermont, Vermont Healthcare System

• Interviews
  – Community Action Agencies, Shelters, and Government programs providers
Data Collection Problems

• Hidden Population
  – Highly transient
  – Not connected to government programs
  – Deliberately trying to hide

• Small Population
  – Small sample sizes
# Poverty In Vermont

## Comparison of Vermont Demographics to National Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Vermont Low Income (at or below 200% of the poverty line)</th>
<th>USA Low Income (at or below 200% of the poverty line)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Racial Demographics</strong></td>
<td>Approximately 100% White</td>
<td>38% White 22% Black 3% Asian 34% Hispanic 1% Native American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of Residential Area</strong></td>
<td>Approximately 100% Rural</td>
<td>20% Rural 40% Suburban 40% Urban</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Poverty In Vermont

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parental Marital Status</strong></td>
<td>48% Married</td>
<td>48% Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parental Education Status</strong></td>
<td>10% Less than HS 36% High School 55% College</td>
<td>24% Less than HS 36% HS 40% College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parental Employment</strong></td>
<td>Full time = 55% Part time = 32% None = 13%</td>
<td>Full time = 51% Part time = 29% None = 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parental Marital Status</strong></td>
<td>48% Married</td>
<td>48% Married</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unique Factors In Vermont

1. More Educated
2. White
3. Rural
Compounding Factors with Deep Poverty

1. Sexual Violence and Child Abuse
2. Substance Abuse
3. Mental Illness
Sexual Violence and Child Abuse

- People in Poverty are more likely to be victims of Sexual Assault and Child Abuse.
  - Sexual violence is negatively correlated with Income.
- Victims of sexual violence have a harder time regaining economic independence.
Mental Illness

• People suffering from mental illnesses:
  – more likely to be in poverty
  – self medicate with substances
  – Likely to believe myths about government programs
Substance Abuse

• People who abuse substances:
  – Are much more likely to be in poverty
  – are less likely to seek government benefits
Programs to alleviate poverty

1. Conditional Cash Transfer Programs
2. Community Development Projects
3. Transportation Improvements
Conditional Cash Transfer Programs

• Provide financial assistance in exchange for agreeing to follow certain guidelines
  – New York’s Opportunity New York or Mexico’s Progresa

• Effective, but less effective than in urban areas
  – Human capital not as much of an issue
  – Increased barriers for disabled
Community Development Projects

• Increase auxiliary services and stability
  – Federal Community Development Block Grants or Step up Savannah

• These projects will be difficult and costly in rural areas
Transportation Improvements

• People in Poverty need public transportation
• 40% of people in Rural areas lack public transportation
• Improvements to public transportation will likely be more effective in Vermont
Conclusions

1. Vermont residents living in Deep Poverty are likely have compounding issues

2. Vermont’s rural nature causes barriers to improving poverty which may be alleviated by improving public transportation.