

Seven Approaches to Poverty Reduction

These Approaches to Poverty Reduction were taken in part from the *Thriving Community Guide* used by participants of the Study Circles process. The approaches are used to frame action strategies for communities addressing issues of poverty.

Approach #1

Focus on early childhood, youth, and schools.

A person who supports this approach might say:

More young people live in poverty than adults. When people grow up in poverty, they are more likely to stay in poverty. We need to stop this cycle. To prevent poverty later in life, we must meet our children's basic needs. We must make sure that they have enough food, good schools and healthcare, and strong role models.

Approach #2

Create more and better jobs.

A person who supports this approach might say:

We need a more diverse economy that is less reliant on a single industry and is resilient in prosperous as well as challenging economic times. Everyone benefits when people are working. We need to create more jobs that pay enough so people can take care of themselves and their family.

Approach #3

Help people meet their urgent needs.

A person who supports this approach might say:

We need to make sure that no one goes hungry. Everyone should have a safe place to sleep. Everyone needs basic services. If there are more services for people who need them, we all will be better off.

Approach #4

Join with others to create change.

A person who supports this approach might say:

Some people in the community don't want to work together. We need to find better ways to bring people together to deal with conflict and to face hard issues. We need to find more ways for people to unite and work for new, fair policies. If we do this, we all will be better off.

Approach #5

Build assets and hold onto them.

A person who supports this approach might say:

Assets can be people or skills; they can also be money or things we own. We can use assets to help ourselves and each other. Taking care of each other is an asset. For example, you can use your car to drive someone who needs a

ride, or to visit a sick person. Some assets can be handed down in families, or from group to group.

Approach #6

Fight racism.

A person who supports this approach might say:

Racism hurts everyone and keeps some people in poverty. It affects jobs, loans, housing, arrests, and schooling. Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanics and Latinos, Asian Americans, and others face racism and unfairness every day. We must end the practice of racism, by people and by institutions.

Approach #7

Invest in basic community resources.

A person who supports this approach might say:

Many communities lack basic resources. We need good roads, reliable electric service, medical care, and cellular phone coverage for businesses and emergencies. We also need more people who can be community leaders. If we develop these resources, then everyone in the community will be better off.