

THE POVERTY CHALLENGE



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AN INVITATION TO VIEW, USE AND SHARE OUR RESOURCES

The Poverty Challenge is an experiential event to educate individuals on the challenges of living in urban poverty. As a participant you are given a profile to follow and challenges that you'll try to meet by seeking help from local agencies during a simulation involving real procedures and documents from community and government organizations in your hometown.

You'll have to do your best to succeed by providing the necessary answers, information and documentation. If you are not successful, you'll have to find another way for you and your family to survive.

After the simulation, you'll have a chance to talk to other participants at the Challenge, and learn from experts about the difficulties of living on social assistance.

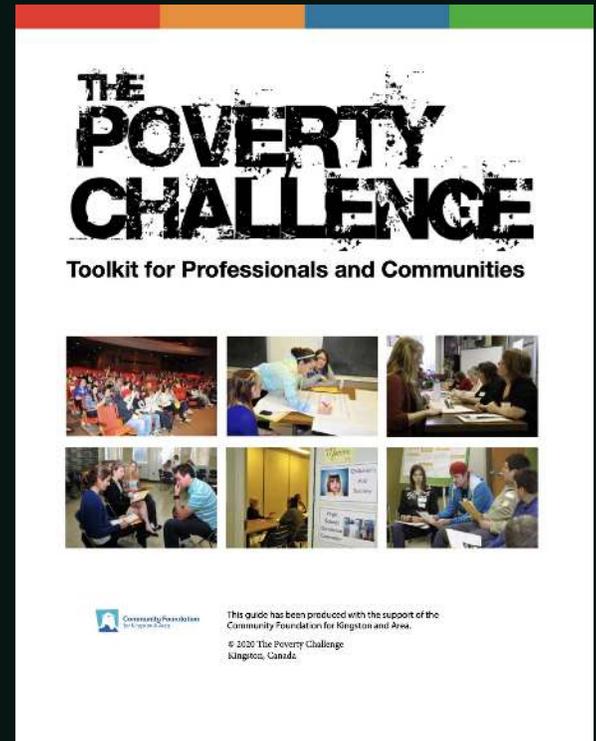
We have developed two 2020 Poverty Challenge Toolkits

The Poverty Challenge Toolkit for Professionals and Communities provides instructions on how to present a two-hour event for a community group, politicians, college/university classes or professional development. This is accompanied by an Appendix with editable Word documents of all supporting materials.

The Poverty Challenge Toolkit for High School Students and editable Word version of the Appendix provides all the information that you need to present an event to students in grades 9-12.

These are free online resources which will guide groups as they replicate two kinds of events.

Your organization can recreate this event in your community just as groups in Ottawa, Sudbury, Muskoka, Guelph, and other Ontario cities have.



When planning an event of your own, you can begin by viewing some or all of these short instructional videos to familiarize yourself with the concept of a Poverty Challenge:

- [Poverty Challenge Walkthrough](#) provides an overview of how the Challenge takes place. (7:41 minutes)
- [Visits to Agencies](#) depicts the interaction of participants with volunteers who have assumed the roles of social service agency employees. (10:58 minutes)
- Introductory activities:
 - [Wealth Squares](#) is an interactive demonstration of the shocking wealth gap in Canada (3:20 minutes)
 - [Poverty Stereotypes](#) is an exercise that demonstrates the power of participating in a Poverty Challenge (2:47 minutes)
- [Four of our Profile Experts share their experiences.](#) In these interviews, four people living in Ontario share why they need social assistance, how little money they receive, the budgeting challenges they face and what kinds of improvements they would like to see in social services and community resources. (27:43 minutes)

How to use these resources

- Email this announcement to others in your field.
- Show our videos at staff meetings.
- Send relevant videos to colleagues and friends.
- Invite your book club to spend an evening discussing issues related to poverty and the gaps in our network of social services. You can begin with the Wealth Squares video, then view the interviews with our Profile Experts, and finally watch the Poverty Stereotypes exercise. All of these will take only 35 minutes to view.

WRAPAROUND SERVICES:

Our research into a client-focused approach

One of the realizations participants come to at the end of The Poverty Challenge is just how difficult it can be for individuals living with less to access the programs and services they need to survive. Often something that may seem like a simple goal can actually have multiple steps, and if one does not have the resources or knowledge to navigate "the system" these become formidable barriers.

As people involved in The Poverty Challenge for many years, we realized that one way to address this difficulty was to develop a wraparound program, to provide support for individuals that need help moving forward. With the generous support of the Community Foundation for Kingston and Area and the Social Planning Council of Kingston and District, we conducted research into wraparound programs currently available in our community, as well as further afield, both in Canada and beyond.

Our research helped us develop a three-part model consisting of:

- an online portal where individuals could find out what programs and services would meet their needs;
- a wraparound program providing one-on-one service for individuals who need help to connect them with the programs and services they require;
- case-conferencing when appropriate;
- a regular series of online panel presentations for frontline workers, focusing on specific areas of service, providing up-to-date information on local resources, and networking opportunities.

We hope other communities or agencies will look into this client-focused approach, and recognize the potential of wraparound programming to help individuals move forward in life, and address many of the challenges caused by their poverty.

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