

Summer Programs for Children in Appalachia
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Abstract

The Appalachian region receives little national attention or funds to alleviate its rampant poverty. Rawls's concept of fair equality of opportunity should be the goal of programs that work to alleviate poverty. Christian Appalachian Project-Camp Shawnee, The Lunch Express, and Royal Family Kids' Camps are three programs that aim to alleviate child poverty during the summer. Barriers to fair equality of opportunity in Appalachia are in the areas of health, education, environment, political involvement, and food insecurity. Improvements to Camp Shawnee should include more Appalachian involvement, political education, health education, and future planning. These can be measured through many comprehensive statistics across time.

Keywords: Appalachia, camp, children, Christian Appalachian Project, education, future planning, political process, poverty, summer programs, youth

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Introduction

Many of the resources combatting poverty have been focused in urban areas and have neglected rural poverty in areas like Central Appalachia. Central Appalachia consists of West Virginia, southeastern Ohio, eastern Kentucky, eastern Tennessee, western Virginia, and western North Carolina (Yao, Matthews, & Hillemeier, 2012). Central Appalachia has consistently lagged behind Northern and Southern Appalachia, as well as non-Appalachia, in terms of socioeconomic and health indicators (McGarvey, Leon-Verdin, Killos, Guterbock, & Cohn, 2011; Yao, Matthews, & Hillemeier, 2012). The war on poverty has gone on long enough without effectively addressing the context of poverty in Central Appalachia.

The programs that do exist to combat poverty in Central Appalachia are not actually working to change the social determinants to create a fair equality of opportunity for residents of Central Appalachia. Social determinants important to alleviating poverty in Appalachia include health, the job market, environmental preservation, food security, family structure, education, and transportation, among others. It is difficult to develop and carry out a program that can effectively change all of these social determinants in order to affect the prevalent poverty in Appalachia. Summer programs are limited in the extent to which they can affect any of these social determinants, which will be addressed later.

In working to improve the poverty situation in Appalachia, the goal should be to create fair equality of opportunity. This is a concept from philosopher John Rawls, who

defines fair equality of opportunity as something different from equality of opportunity.

Equality of opportunity does not allow for second chances if one happens to make a mistake on the path to the outcome, nor does equality of opportunity mean equal outcomes. Equality of opportunity does not take one's social circumstances into account (Edelman, 2013). Equality of opportunity gives jobs, education, and select resources to the most talented and qualified.

On the other hand, fair equality of opportunity, according to Rawls, gives the same access to opportunity with consideration for social determinants. For example, in the college admissions process, students from poor-performing school districts may not achieve the same SAT scores as students from an elite private school who received extensive SAT preparation from a private tutor. Fair equality of opportunity means that admissions counselors would offer a spot to the student from a poor-performing school district in order to foster the opportunity for the student to become most qualified for a job. Additionally, society should invest in programs that would allow the student to become the most qualified, such as a summer program that can enrich the student's education and qualifications (Daniels, 2008). The ultimate goals of summer programs in Appalachia should be to optimize fair equality of opportunity for children living in poverty by changing the social determinants such that children have access to the resources and opportunities that would allow them to escape poverty. Even if the outcome is not that the child escapes poverty, each child should have a fair chance of doing so.

An in-depth investigation of current programs allows for an assessment of the effectiveness of current summer programs in Appalachia. The primary focus of this investigation is Camp Shawnee, one of two summer camps associated with Christian Appalachian Project (CAP). An effective analysis must understand and critique the barriers to fair equality of opportunity. Based on these barriers, appropriate and pragmatic goals must be set in order to remove the barriers to fair equality of opportunity. Many holistic measures must be considered to effectively assess the effectiveness and success of summer programs in lowering those barriers and achieving those goals.

Christian Appalachian Project and Other Programs

While many summer intervention programs exist for children living in urban poverty around the country, I had a fairly unique opportunity to volunteer with Christian Appalachian Project in eastern Kentucky. CAP is an interdenominational Christian-umbrella, non-governmental organization that provides services to families, children, the elderly, people living with disabilities, and disaster relief sites. To my knowledge, it is one of the only summer programs specifically geared to children living in poverty in Appalachia, especially in a camp context. Many summer camps across the country offer scholarships for less-privileged children to attend, whether it is specifically with other less-privileged children or integrated with more-privileged children. CAP has two camps, one for each of their regions in Kentucky: Camp Shawnee, Sandy Valley region, and Camp Andrew Jackson, Cumberland Valley region (Christian Appalachian Project, 2008). Both are similar in their administration, recruitment, and qualifications. Both camps function from donations, as do all programs under CAP.

Two summers serving the children and families of Central Appalachia has taught me about the complexities of poverty in the area and the various issues the war on poverty needs to address in order to improve the equality of opportunity for the children and youth of Central Appalachia. My work with Christian Appalachian Project was focused in Floyd County, Kentucky at CAP's Camp Shawnee in the Sandy Valley region. The nature of the program allows outside college-aged volunteers to serve as camp counselors to groups of fifteen to twenty-five children each week. The campers meet at a church about thirty minutes down the mountain from where the camp is, which means that the summer staff do not see any part of the child's home life aside from what the camper brings up during the week. These circumstances discourage counselors from giving campers special treatment based on their life situations. It also can be difficult for counselors to respond with empathy when a camper does not listen or acts out without knowing more of the camper's background.

Both regions of CAP have in-school educational programs during the year, which is how we recruit campers. All summer staff members are volunteers, from counselors to coordinators, nurses to kitchen staff. Campers and their families pay only ten dollars for each week of camp. We provide essentially the same experience that other traditional camps do in our range of activities. However, we have another full set of needs we must meet for the campers. Some campers arrive with nothing in their suitcases, so we provide all bedding for the week, and we have a large supply of donated clothes, bathing suits, and shoes for campers. We strive to meet all physical, emotional, and spiritual needs for each camper.

For summer 2013, Camp Shawnee served 452 campers, and 85% of them live in households that fall under the poverty line. Administrative changes in recent years have led to the implementation of new measures of success, but it has not been long enough to have a large enough data set to analyze.

Campers primarily come from four counties near the camp: Magoffin County, Floyd County, Martin County, and Johnson County. Each county is overwhelmingly white in its racial makeup with a range of 91% - 98.6% of residents identifying as white. Magoffin County has around 13,000 residents, a median household income of about \$25,000, and average house value of \$48,300. Floyd County, where Camp Shawnee is located, has about 40,000 residents, a median household income of just over \$29,000, and average house value of \$69,300. Martin County has around 12,700 residents, a median household income of \$25,300, and an average house value of \$77,100. Johnson County has about 23,300 residents, a median household income of \$34,466, and an average house value of \$76,600 (Powers, 2014). For fiscal year 2013, Martin County, Floyd County, and Magoffin County were designated as distressed counties by Appalachian Regional Commission, which is the most concerning economic status on their scale. Johnson County is described as an at-risk county for fiscal year 2013, which is one level below distressed. However it also has two census tracts designated as distressed areas within the county that have median household incomes that are 60.8% and 46.9% of the US average income, respectively, and have poverty rates that are 170.4% and 185.4% of the national average, respectively (Appalachian Regional Commission, 2014). It is clear that the populations in these areas are in great need economically, as are most of the counties in

Central Appalachia. Unfortunately, CAP does not keep records of educational achievement or attainment of campers. The need for programs like CAP's summer camps in this region and throughout Appalachia is great.

Camp Shawnee receives subsidies from USDA for campers who are eligible for food stamps. The meals we provide are similar to those children receive at school during the school year, and 85% of campers receive free and reduced lunch (Powers, 2014). On some occasions, we have been known to accept applications and campers who do not meet the age of eligibility for that week because the coordinators and program director know that camp is the child's main source of food for the summer. It is nearly impossible to say no to a six-year-old who wants to come to camp for eight-to-ten-year-old week when you are aware of the home situation and food insecurity. CAP is not the only program in Central Appalachia that is working to make food available to children during the summer.

Second Harvest Food Bank of Northeast Tennessee has a program called The Lunch Express that provides school lunches to children during the summer. During the school year, children eligible for free and reduced lunch can receive two meals and snacks during the day, as well as free backpacks of food for the weekend in some areas. Some programs exist that allow children to come to school cafeterias during the summer so they do not have to go hungry. The Lunch Express is a school bus turned bread truck that travels to different communities in the hills of Appalachian Tennessee every weekday to bring lunch to hungry children. The regimented balanced meals are only for children under age eighteen, and no one may receive second helpings. Even though this

program must follow the same strict federal guidelines for providing food that Camp Shawnee does, the humanity still shows as those distributing the meals show some discretion. One woman gives a mother and her toddler son an extra fruit cup after he throws it out of the window of the school bus, as toddlers are apt to do (Saslow, 2013). Those working to alleviate poverty in Appalachia know how common a reaction this is, how governmental regulations seem so cold when you are looking at the face of poverty.

As necessary and good as this program is, it is so limited in its ability to change the situation on a large scale. The bus driver spends only fifteen minutes in each community before he must continue on this route. Somehow, he still manages to get to know details about his regulars, even without a sustained period of contact (Saslow, 2013). The Lunch Express is a program that was developed to meet a particular need in the area. The goals of this program are clearly not to impact the education, economic, or political outcomes of the children. The program also does not have the resources available to address such broader issues. It is clear that more needs to be done to help summer hunger for school children, but this is definitely a step in the right direction.

A more comprehensive example of a program like CAP's Camp Shawnee is Royal Family Kids, whose camp program is the basis of the 2013 movie *Camp*. Similar to Camp Shawnee, Royal Family Kids tries to meet the emotional, physical, and spiritual needs of children in need. The organization focuses specifically on children in the foster care system. They come to one of 200 camps run by churches across the country for a week with a mentor counselor. While Camp Shawnee consists of a counselor group of three to five counselors for fifteen to twenty-eight children, Royal Family Kids' Camps

offer a one-on-one mentoring relationship for children. This gives volunteer mentors and foster children the time to break down barriers of mistrust and fear that are common and to make room for a strong foundation of a deeper relationship. Some of these campers return year after year and eventually hope to become counselors and mentors for others (Royal Family Kids, 2014). These relationships show the potential for children to develop a feeling of permanence with their mentor after one week of successful relationship-building and nurturing that has likely been absent in their past with their biological family.

Applying this concept to Appalachia is an interesting dilemma. Many children at Camp Shawnee have been removed from their parents' homes, but that does not mean that they are in foster care. Child Protective Services always tries to place children with relatives and family members before resorting to foster care. Because a strong pillar of Appalachia is the sense of family and connection, the children end up with grandparents or other relatives instead of foster care. Too many of the campers with whom I have worked do not live with their parents because of drug addictions and prison sentences, not to mention abusive situations. When a child cannot get to sleep because she wants to know why her mom does not love her enough to stay clean so she can regain custody, your heart breaks. When you hear a fifteen-year-old maturely articulate the fact that it was not her fault that her mother's boyfriend raped her and her mother took the boyfriend's side, you can become jaded and cynical. However, seeing the beauty and potential in the children as they play, laugh, sing, and learn during their week at camp gives you hope for their future. Yes, camp is a wonderful time for a week away from

some of the horrors of home, but can CAP do more to help the future of these children past their week on the mountain? Does CAP have the capacity to impact some social determinants in order to promote fair equality of opportunity? Yes, but it requires foundational and structural differences to the program.

Barriers to Success

Appalachia as a region has many barriers to success and fair equality of opportunity in the form of problems with social determinants. As previously mentioned, poor education systems, poor health outcomes, a limited job market, environmental pollution due to the coal mining industry, food insecurity caused partially by food deserts, and limited access to reliable transportation are all social determinants that impact Appalachian children's opportunities for success. Even though these issues are important, valid, and real, summer programs can only do so much to address the social determinants. Additionally, addressing these social determinants is nearly impossible to do in isolation due to the complex and interwoven nature of these barriers.

Education systems in Appalachia are poor and lead to lower levels of educational attainment and achievement compared to non-Appalachia contexts. It is arguable that education is not valued as highly in Appalachian culture as it is outside of Appalachia. Outside of Appalachia, the incentive for graduating high school and earning a college degree is a higher paying job. In Appalachia, the jobs in the communities where children live and go to school do not require such levels of educational attainment. Thus, it seems illogical for students to leave home and pay money to go to college to earn a degree to get a job in the community. This idea pervades to all levels of education and throughout

generations such that neither parents nor children are concerned enough about education to work to prevent the summer slide of reading and math skills during the summers. This leads to students not having the skills necessary to be admitted to a good college if they want to continue their education.

Another barrier to educational achievement and attainment is teen pregnancy and motherhood. This barrier also crosses into the dimensions of family structure and health outcomes. While some argue that motherhood is a rite of passage in Appalachian communities, that does not lessen the difficulty that single teen mothers experience in raising and providing for a family (Bell, 201). If the teen mother is not married or in a stable long-term relationship with the father of the child, then the family structure is precarious and limited, which does not allow for optimal care and resources for the baby. Teen mothers must juggle education, work, family, and other support at a stage in which they are not fully developed physically, mentally, or emotionally. Teen mothers who did not participate in an urban intervention program were significantly more likely to drop out of high school than teen mothers who had no support program. Additionally those who were not involved in the program were more likely to have repeat pregnancies (Solomon & Liefeld, 1998). Teen mothers are less likely to graduate high school or complete job skill training. They are also more likely to live in poverty or receive public assistance (McCave & Shiflet, 2010). Despite the cultural differences in values, this does not set up the mother or child for high chances of positive outcomes later in life. It is possible to overcome these barriers; however, the chances are lower and the path is more difficult.

Shannon Bell (2013) found in her experience with environmental activists in Appalachia that most did not realize the political power and rights they had. If children and adults are only learning about government processes in schools that are already lower quality, then it is not surprising that voters in Appalachia do not know their rights and efficacy in the political arena. This means they do not advocate for their own interests, which allows large companies, such as in the coal industry, to dominate Appalachian politics with large lobbying firms (Bell, 2013). The voices heard loudest and most are those of advocates for companies that substantially support campaigns through donations, as opposed to the human voices of constituents affected by the large companies' actions.

Some of the critical negative consequences of the lack of political participation come in the form of negative health outcomes due to unregulated aspects of the coal industry. The mountain top removal method of mining severely damages the land, which disrupts the natural ecosystems throughout Appalachia. Storms are much more likely to cause floods after mountain top removal mining has occurred in an area. Additionally, the methods of disposing of coal slurry, or waste from the mining process, are not secure enough. They can easily leak into water tables and contaminate drinking water, fish living in creeks, and home gardens. This alone takes away food sources for families. Additionally, people living in coal communities experience severe health problems, such as cancer, liver failure, gall bladder failure, skin rashes, as well as black lung from working in and around coalmines. (Bell, 2013). The people of Appalachia can no longer afford to be silent on the political front.

The coal industry maintains its support by sustaining the illusion that Appalachia is dependent upon coal industry jobs. This is despite the fact that coal jobs are disappearing and will not be returning. Furthermore, there are the fewest jobs in coal now than there have been since the coal industry began (Bell, 2014). Additionally, unemployed people are going to have less income and are more likely to live in poverty. Those living in poverty are more likely to have poor health outcomes. Thus, those who are unemployed are more likely to have poorer health outcomes (Appalachian Regional Commission, 2014). These issues are significant barriers to happy and healthy lives for Appalachians.

If families in Appalachia cannot trust the food grown in their gardens or fish caught in their streams, then they must have access to healthy food in grocery stores. However, that is also a barrier to fair equality of opportunity for Appalachian people. The rural nature of Appalachia means it is a very spread out region. It takes a significant amount of time to get anywhere, whether it is to another hollow, to town, or to run errands like grocery shopping. For working families, that is another extended trip on top of an already lengthy commute. Making that trip requires having a vehicle that can reliably transport people through the mountains. Most times it is easier to pick up food from a fast food restaurant or gas station, not to mention that it is cheaper than buying fresh produce at the grocery store. These factors lead to high levels of obesity, diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure (McGarvey et al., 2011). These form barriers to success in the form of physical health.

Living in poverty is stressful. In Appalachia, some people cope with this stress in a variety of unhealthy ways, including substance abuse, alcohol abuse, and tobacco use. Sometimes this stress also leads to the development of mental illnesses, such as depression, anxiety disorders, and psychotic disorders. Again, the rural nature of Appalachia means that the resources that are available are stretched thin across large regions. Law enforcement and prevention specialists cannot possibly prevent or stop the use of all illicit substances because they do not have enough resources or funding. Mental health professionals are so few and far between that they cannot provide therapy and services to all of the many victims of child and sexual abuse or patients with personality, psychotic, and/or mood disorders. Each of these social determinants interacts with each other, and together, they exist as barriers to success for people living in Appalachia.

Recommendations for improvements

With these barriers in mind, it is important to remember that summer programs for youth living in poverty will not completely eradicate poverty in Appalachia. However, they can be an important puzzle piece to a holistic offering of resources to families and communities. It is unrealistic to expect summer programs to bring about a complete overhaul of the government's treatment of Appalachian poverty, to make foundational changes in health services, or to eliminate the food deserts throughout Appalachia.

In order for CAP's summer camp program to lower the aforementioned barriers to fair equality of opportunity, they must change the basic structure of their camping program. Summer camps can provide youth and children an education of health, the

political process, and future planning. Included in health education are sexual health, nutritional health, exercise health, mental health, and general physical health. Political education involves learning about the process, what individuals can do. Exposing children and youth to the ability to lobby and communicate with local, state, and national representatives will empower them to let their voices be heard as adults. Planning for the future and setting goals contains educational, vocational, and practical life components. Children and youth can learn what they need to do in order to achieve their goals in an educational and vocational sense, which also includes financial planning so they can hopefully escape the pulls of generational poverty. Additionally, changes in the demographics of counselors and structure of the duration of camp are essential to lower the barriers to fair equality of opportunity.

The current goal of Camp Shawnee is to promote the growth and education of youth through memorable camp experiences “that will last a lifetime, and to work in the local schools to teach and model a variety of social and communication skills” (Camp Shawnee, 2013). These goals are clearly difficult to quantify and measure, which further indicates the need for a change of goals and structure.

My experience working with campers in Appalachia was different from my summer working at the camp where I went as a child because those campers came from mainly middle to upper-middle class backgrounds. Campers who grew up going to that camp became invested in the camp itself and would talk about counselors who had not worked at the camp for three or four years. At Camp Shawnee, we would have campers who would not remember counselors’ names even from earlier in the summer. This

suggests a difference in object permanence. It is difficult to maintain a routine and a sense of stability in a household living in poverty due to financial, food, and transportation insecurity. Especially if the child is moving homes or the parents are transient, it is challenging to build and maintain a sense of permanence.

Some of the counselors at Camp Shawnee had been long-term volunteers in the schools and at the now closed child development center throughout the school year. Campers were more likely to recognize those volunteers at camp than they were volunteers who were only at camp for the summer. However, those volunteers were likely only in the area for one year, which still does not allow for a strong, lasting relationship or influence. Long-term volunteers are likely not from Appalachia and may come into the situation with the idea that they will “save Appalachia,” even though they may not stay in Appalachia past their summer, or yearlong commitment to service. A further goal of summer programs should be to build long-lasting relationships with mentors who come from Appalachian communities.

The best way to improve Camp Shawnee is to incorporate some aspects of the Royal Family Kids’ Camps and expand it to further benefit both counselors and campers. The pull of Royal Family Kids’ Camps is the strong, deep, and intentional formation of intimate relationships between campers and mentors that can span multiple years. While it is possible for those relationships to develop and grow in the current structure of Camp Shawnee, the relative transience of campers and counselors makes it more difficult. New counselors only have to commit to a minimum of three weeks of volunteering at camp, while returning counselors or long-term CAP volunteers in other programs can serve for

as short as a week. This allows counselors to stay refreshed so they do not become burned out, but it does not function as a method for deep relationships between campers and counselors to form. For this reason, campers and counselors should have the opportunity to build strong relationships with campers over a longer period of time.

The best situation for this relationship development is for camp to last longer than one week of the summer. Understanding the developmental limitations of having young children at camp and away from their homes and families for multiple weeks at a time narrows the age eligibility of camp. In order to build the best relationship and have the most beneficial impact on the life of the child, it should be limited to late elementary, middle, and high school students, or ages eleven and older. This would also imply that fewer children could benefit from the camp experience due to a simple scarcity of resources, at least at the beginning. Having the same 80 children at camp for five weeks during the summer means that camp cannot serve the 452 that it does with the current structure. Not included in the 452 number is the number of children who are counted twice or three times because they already come to camp multiple weeks each summer. If the program were successful, it would hopefully attract the resources that would allow it to expand to serve more children.

Incorporating more counselors from Appalachia into the staff would give the staff the opportunity to cross cultural boundaries more easily. I found that campers were more receptive to my instruction and discipline when I turned on my southern accent. It was familiar to them, and they knew I meant business, which made it easier to get done what we needed to do. Campers will be more likely to learn and accept what counselors have

to say if the counselors have the same background and shared experiences as them. An additional structural change for this would mean paying counselors for their work.

Counselors from Appalachia probably have education and family costs they need to cover through work and may have less disposable income that allows many non-Appalachian counselors to volunteer for one or multiple summers during college.

The curriculum and activities of camp would also need to adapt to meet the new goals of education on health, political processes, and goal-setting. The extended time period of camp would allow for the same camp activities in addition to the new focuses. Camp Shawnee currently brings in presenters on certain topics such as water safety and forestry. It would be beneficial to have a presenter from the health field to discuss nutrition, substance use, sexual and reproductive health, exercise, mental health, and lifetime habits of good health. A simple awareness of what campers eat during meals and having them assess the nutrition value of each meal allows them to think critically and prepares them to plan for how they will treat their bodies after they leave camp. One of the obstacles to implementing these changes at Camp Shawnee is the religious connection it has to the Christian tradition and the strong Christian roots that pervade Appalachia. This could cause complications in addressing sexual and reproductive health as camp staff, campers, and campers' families may disagree with methods of sexual and reproductive health education. From my experience, counselors and administrative staff may object to sexual and reproductive education coming from a religious camp that has Catholic roots. Even with developmentally appropriate health curriculum, parents may be

uncomfortable with the situation. This is only one of a few reasons that it may be best to develop a new summer camp outside of CAP and Camp Shawnee to achieve these goals.

Another reason would be the political involvement. As many Americans agree with the separation of church and state, it can be dangerous for a camp sponsored by a religious organization to teach about the political process and advocate for political involvement. Although it is possible to have bipartisan and non-partisan political education, the issue is so charged that many religious organizations in Appalachia refuse to house political meetings in their places of worship (Bell, 2014). My experience with CAP tells me that most staff would not be comfortable or feel capable to lead a political education activity. They prefer to keep politics out of the camp atmosphere. Additionally, it is possible that donors could discontinue giving upon hearing that a political education was a component of camp. Across developmental stages, campers will experience varying levels of political involvement. Younger groups will simply write letters to various representatives no matter the party affiliation. Older groups may make phone calls and write letters to representatives about issues about which they feel strongly. Perhaps as they develop and grow, they will learn to become critical of the coal industry that can impact their lives in such negative ways. These practices will enable campers to feel comfortable about the political process and more empowered to advocate for their interests as voting constituents.

The goal of future planning incorporates many different factors that can eventually impact campers' lives. While allowing campers to form their own futures, counselors and staff can help to provide them with the resources and tools needed to

achieve those goals, whatever they may be. If the goal is to go to college, counselors with college application and admission experience can explain the need for SAT and ACT testing, letters of recommendation, and the application timeline. If the goal is to get a job after graduation, counselors can give advice on resume building, interview skills, and ways to search for living-wage jobs. This may involve leaving the area to find good jobs, or it could be preparing campers to be the best coal miners they can be. It is about creating a fair equality of opportunity so that campers can have choices in the future. A crucial component of future planning is financial planning. Teaching campers how to balance a budget or checkbook and about smart credit can empower them to most effectively use the money they have, rather than simply wasting it as soon as they get a payment.

Goals and Measures of Success

Even though Appalachia is a region within the United States, it still has a unique culture that can be minimized from an outsiders' perspective. With this in mind, it is important to acknowledge cultural and value differences in describing poverty and plans to alleviate poverty in Appalachia. Assessing the goals and success of programs working to create fair equality of opportunity means considering the cultural context and using a variety of methods to measure progress and achievement. Assessment must be appropriate in relation to the goals and ability of a program to meet those goals. As a part of this, it is important to be cognizant of the potential to impose middle class standards onto a population whose value system does not perfectly align with white middle class America. That being said, it is possible to enact methods that measure the capability of

participants to make more choices and have more opportunities. Essentially this means that if some youth involved in a program become pregnant teenagers or do not go to college, then it cannot be determined that the program was a complete failure.

Assessments must acknowledge the external factors that may have a large influence on personal situations more than participation in a summer program.

Even narrowing the range of impact that summer programs can have on alleviating poverty for children and youth does not easily lend itself to appropriate measures of success. Too many external factors, such as family structure, institutional resources, availability of transportation, environmental hazards, and food insecurity, among others, can dilute the perceived effectiveness of a summer program. Simply having the knowledge of a solution to a problem does not mean that a young person can effectively solve it for himself/herself. Referring to the barriers previously addressed, a child can know that fruits and vegetables are healthier and better to eat. However, if the child cannot get to the grocery store or does not have enough money, then it is not possible to do what the child knows he/she should do. For this reason, obesity rates can be a measure of a population, but they should not be the main evidence for a program's lack of success or justification for budget cuts or elimination. In reality, the best measures of the success of a summer program with those goals are difficult to quantify.

Measures of empowerment, happiness, and self-efficacy would be effective, but that begs the question of how much these traits will quantifiably help to lift children and youth out of poverty. If the ultimate goal is to provide fair equality of opportunity to these children, then measures must concern lowering and removing the barriers to those

opportunities for a life above the poverty line. As previously mentioned, teen pregnancy makes it much more difficult to complete high school or any additional schooling, which, in turn, makes it more difficult to get a well-paying job. Lowering that barrier through comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education is the first step to fair equality of opportunity. Also, mental health education includes productive methods of coping with stress that do not involve using drugs, tobacco, or alcohol. Hopefully, education stressing the dangers of substance use and addiction will be deterrent enough for children and youth, but the cultural influence of this factor, especially smoking, is difficult to overcome. Even though programs can address these topics, substance use statistics should not be a sole measure of success due to the strong cultural precedence for abuse and addiction the program must surmount. However, when substance use statistics are analyzed along with teen pregnancy rates, high school dropout rates, and obesity rates can give a better picture of the success of a summer program.

The easiest and most conventional way to raise people out of poverty is through work. Connecting children and youth to resources that will allow them to get well-paying jobs will foster their capability, as well as give them the resources to escape poverty, along with successful education of financial planning. As with health measures, economic indicators of a program's success may not tell the whole story. Summer programs cannot bring a new industry of living-wage jobs to the area. Even if students are more prepared to work those jobs, they will not be successful if the jobs are not available in the community. Summer programs can work to increase the opportunity that students have to get jobs, even if they are not within Appalachian communities. Creating

fair equality of opportunity in this instance is fostering the capability of the students' mobility. Larger scale external factors can skew the perceptions of success if one only examines unemployment rates and proportions of the population with a college degree, particularly if students in the program move away from the area.

Just as it is insufficient to address poverty in a piecemeal manner, it is inadequate to measure the success of a summer program with one or a few health, educational, or economic indicators. Instead, it is necessary to examine the whole context of the problem and what a summer program can do within that context, taking into account institutional barriers that may still exist. Teen pregnancy rates, obesity rates, lifespan comparisons, chronic illness rates, and substance use statistics taken as a whole and analyzed within the context of the community in which the summer program works can be beneficial in measuring the health success of the program.

Educational success markers can be measured through high school graduation rates, college education rates, as well as reading and math scores. Summer programs can appropriately and realistically work to prevent the summer slide in reading and math skills that many children experience in the two or three month break each year. Projective success of the program can be measured through the unemployment rates, and income levels relative to those who do not participate in the program. Political awareness and participation can be measured by voter turnout rates, self-reports of self-efficacy in effecting the political process, and engagement with local, state, and national government politics. Taking each of these areas of measures into account can only indicate the program's success for that individual goal. A full comprehensive understanding of the

data and context for the data is the only way to assess the program's success on a larger scale.

By implementing these programs at Camp Shawnee or starting a different program like it, it is possible to gauge the success of the program through the aforementioned measures. Analyzing obesity rates, teen pregnancy rates, and substance use statistics will measure the success of the health education aspect. Political involvement will be measured through voter turnout rates and self-reports of comfort with the political process and political efficacy. Future planning success will be measured through high school dropout rates, college admission, attendance, and graduation rates, unemployment rates, and levels of debt. Through these activities and measures, it is possible to evaluate the success of a summer program in optimizing fair equality of opportunity.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that poverty pervades much of Appalachia and the resources are not adequately allocated to alleviate the poverty in Appalachia, it is still possible for summer programs to reduce future poverty levels by educating and empowering children and youth. Based on the model of Christian Appalachian Project's Camp Shawnee, the reforms above seek to extend a beneficial program for children and youth living in poverty in Appalachia. By setting quantifiable goals that seek to address appropriate social determinants for summer programs, the aim is to measure the success of the program in the community and in promoting fair equality of opportunity. A successful reformed camping program will create more access to what campers want, whether it is a

college education, living-wage jobs, the political arena, or better health outcomes. They will be equipped with the tools they need to achieve whatever goal they set for themselves. Many barriers to fair equality of opportunity exist for this population, but the realigned goals of the camp aim to cross those barriers. Through education of health, political processes, and future planning, the new activities work to improve the lives of children and youth by bettering their chances in fair equality of opportunity.

In reality, these changes may not be readily adaptable to CAP's current structure. However, it does not diminish the importance of the changes. It may simply need to be a new program not connected to CAP, which is appropriate and acceptable. So long as the resources exist to aid Appalachia's children and youth, their sources are of little importance. By extending the length of camp and recruiting counselors from Appalachia, it is possible to build sustainable deep relationships among campers and counselors. These relationships can build a support system for campers as they apply lessons on health, political processes, and future planning to their lives. These practices can come from within the culture and help to raise at least some of the children and youth of Appalachia out of poverty.

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