

What Matters Most?

Poverty matters, but teachers can matter more!

*Leveraging the power of the science of learning
to remove barriers in support of school and life success.*

What is poverty?

Poverty is the absence of *ANY* resource that can prevent one from being one's best and most successful self. Absent resources may be financial, cognitive, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual.

The science of learning matters.

Newest research in the field of cognitive neuroscience provides great hope for educators. We now know that brains are built, not born, and they are changing every second of every day. The best news? Changes are determined by one's experiences and environment, areas in which we have much control.

Educators matter.

Schools and teachers ARE the environment during the majority of our learners' days, August through June. Every day our words and actions stimulate electrical firestorms in our students' brains that lead to new neural networks. When we know what to do and how to do it, we can literally change students' brains in big and powerful ways. We truly are the architects of our students' brains and must make take full advantage of this opportunity in order to raise and level the bar for every student.

Key practices matter.

Specific key practices matter. When educators understand which practices matter most and why they matter in terms of brain change, we are more likely to implement them consistently and authentically, even under challenging circumstances.

HANDOUTS

**Best
25
Practices**

**Description
of Practices**



**Big
Handout**

WEBSITES

Center of
Excellence
to Prepare Teachers of
Children of Poverty



<https://www.fmucenterofexcellence.org/>

 everykid.everyday.

<https://everykideveryday.com/>

STAY IN TOUCH

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Change the experience, change the brain!

Teaching Children of Poverty

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Center of Excellence to Prepare Teachers of Children of Poverty

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HIGHLIGHTS:

- ❖ Life in poverty can have a significant negative impact on brain development and school achievement.
- ❖ But...brains can and do change every day.
- ❖ Schools can make the difference in how brains develop and how successful children of poverty can be.

How? Develop high-quality, meaningful relationships.

1. Build relationships.
2. Decrease stress.
3. Increase status.
4. Instill a sense of hope.
5. Use effective proactive guidance strategies.
6. Employ 'ME-oriented' best practices all day every day.
7. Understand the goals of student behaviors.

How? Understand and support the health needs of students.

8. Support health needs.

How? Cultivate family and community partnerships.

9. Implement a results-driven partnership plan.

How? Align classroom instruction and assessment with required, tested standards.

10. Use the RBT or Webb's DOK to unpack standards and to align instruction.

How? Motivate students' interest in learning.

11. Motivate the unmotivated – Increase value and expectancy of success.
12. Promote a growth mindset rather than a fixed mindset.

How? Build background knowledge and grow the brain.

13. Build background knowledge in all content areas.
14. Grow executive functions.
15. Build memory trace.
16. Cultivate healthy emotional brains and teach soft skills and hidden rules of school.

How? Design and deliver purposeful instruction.

17. Purposefully teach – know the goal and reach rigor through active, deep and engaging activities.
18. Explicitly teach specific skills—use formats, templates, models, and rubrics.
19. Use questioning strategically.
20. Use (formative) feedback and data to drive instruction.
21. Make learning fun; capitalize on the power of dopamine.
22. Accommodate.
23. Integrate the ARTS.
24. Hold high expectations for all students – *all means ALL!*

How? Benefit from strong and supportive school leadership.

25. Be a leader (or a follower).

FINAL THOUGHTS:

- ❖ Kids from poverty (or any kids) are not stuck the way they are.
- ❖ Everyone who works with low SES kids needs to be on the same page.
- ❖ The brain is designed to change and to adapt to experiences.
- ❖ Change the experience and you'll change the brain.

Jensen (2009)

A teacher affects eternity: he can never tell where his influence stops. Henry Adams