

February 2020 Webinar

Exploring Social Poverty:

**Low-Income Populations and the Impact of Family and
Community Ties**

Presenter:

Sarah Halpern-Meehin, PhD

Associate Professor of Human Development and Family
Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison

Webinar Information

If you are unable to access audio through your computer, please
use your phone:

+1 (562) 247-8422 /access code: **245-823-269**

All attendees are muted.

Ways to participate

- 1, Type your questions in the “Questions” box at the end of the webinar for Q & A time.
2. There might be a “raise your hand” question.
3. There may also be poll questions.

This webinar will be archived at:

<https://www.dibbleinstitute.org/free-resources/webinars/>

Charlie and Helen Dibble





The Dibble Institute

Resources for Teaching Relationship Skills

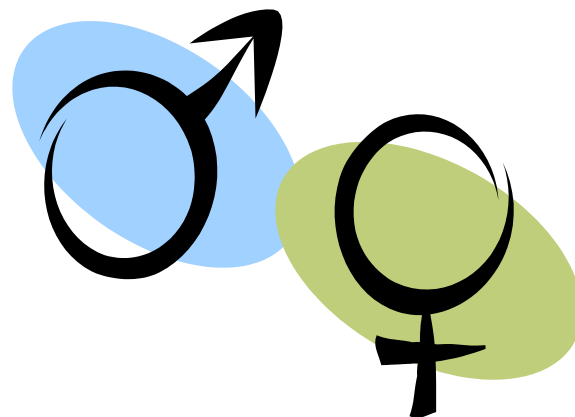
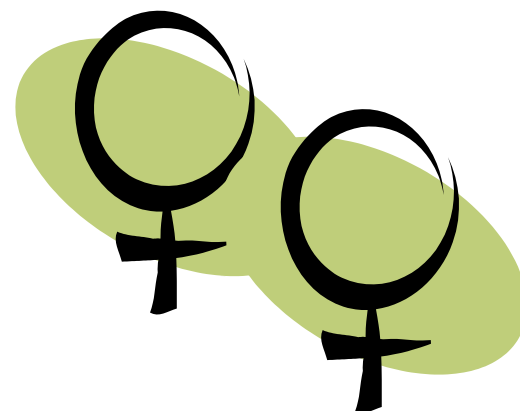
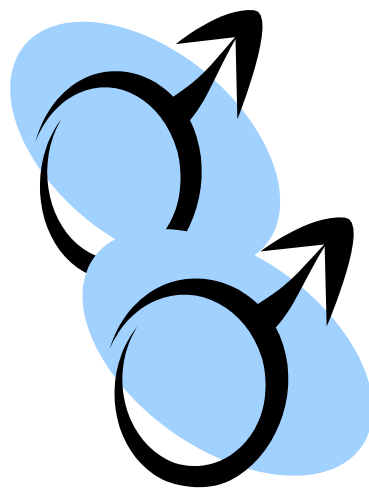
The Dibble Institute believes in research.



The Dibble Institute
believes in stable, healthy families.



The Dibble Institute believes
all people deserve respect.



PRESENTER:



Sarah Halpern-Meekin, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Human
Development and Family Studies at the
University of Wisconsin-Madison

The background of the slide features a close-up, low-key photograph of two hands. One hand is positioned higher and further to the left, while the other is lower and further to the right. Their fingers are extended towards each other, creating a sense of tension and connection. The lighting is soft and directional, highlighting the contours of the hands against a neutral, light-colored background.

Social Poverty

Low-Income Parents and the Struggle for Family and Community Ties

Sarah Halpern-Meekin

University of Wisconsin - Madison





A REPORTER AT LARGE AUGUST 18, 2003 ISSUE

THE MARRIAGE CURE


Is wedlock really a way out of poverty?

By Katherine Boo

The government can't
"sprinkle magic dust on
poor unmarried parents,
hook them up and expect
poverty to disappear."
— Julieanne Malveaux, USA
Today

"Marriage will not fix
poverty."
- Rebecca Rosen,
The Atlantic

"a little noticed twist on
social engineering by
government."
- Alexandra Starr, Business
Week

The background of the entire image is a repeating pattern of yellow smiley faces with black outlines and simple black features for eyes and a curved mouth. Two blue speech bubbles are overlaid on this pattern. The first speech bubble is on the left, and the second is on the right.

“It was like Family Expectations put a phrase or a word above the problem we had. It was like ‘This is your problem here’ so now we knew how to take . . . what steps we needed to . . . take care of it, so that was definitely building us up stronger each week.”

- Robert, 21, first-time father

“With Family Expectations you get peace of mind. You’re around good, positive people. Nothing negative. Nothing.”

- Denelle, 30, mother of two





Study Description

Three waves of in-depth interviews

- 31 couples (total of 192 interviews)
- Wave 1: At program enrollment
 - Individual and couple interviews
- Wave 2: Three months after enrollment
 - Couple interviews
- Wave 3: One year after enrollment
 - Individual interviews

Family Expectations program in Oklahoma City

- Relationship education program teaching relationship skills (e.g., techniques for healthy disagreements & communication)
- For pregnant couples or those with a baby < 3 months old
- Group workshop setting with some case management & resource referrals
- Participation is voluntary, supported, & incentivized

Social Capital vs. Social Poverty

Social capital = social connections that are convertible into economic resources (e.g., job referrals, loans, a place to crash)



Why does social poverty matter?

- Social isolation and lacking emotional supports are tied to poorer health behaviors and mental and physical health outcomes, including mortality (Cacioppo & Patrick 2008; Holt-Lundstad et al. 2015)
- Emotional supports during pregnancy are associated with a lower risk of postpartum depression and better birth outcomes (Collins et al. 1993; Luecken et al. 2013; Nylen, O'Hara, & Engeldinger 2013; Stapleton et al. 2012)
- Social support facilitates better parenting and promotes children's development (Angleley et al. 2015; Bono, Sy, & Kopp 2016; Byrnes & Mill 2012)



Vulnerability to Social Poverty

- Multiple transitions
 - Transition to adulthood
 - Transition to partnership
 - Transition to parenthood
- Instability undermines trust in self and partner





What is it like to take part in Family Expectations?



Short-term
impact of
Family
Expectations



Long-term impact of Family Expectations

How do parents see Family Expectations building their relational resources?



Assistance navigating transitions



Establish shared expectations/norms



Sense of shared commitment to building relationship



Social supports within program environment



Stronger sense of partnership as a relational resource



Implications for Relationship Programs

- Pair with services that address other needs, be they economic, education, or health-related
- Practitioners and curriculum developers need to be prepared to serve diverse families
- Reach individuals before they are pregnant or have children

A background image showing a group of people holding hands in a circle, symbolizing unity and support. The image is slightly blurred and has a soft, warm tone. The hands are of various skin tones, and the people are wearing casual clothing like jeans and t-shirts.

Addressing Social Poverty

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Questions?????

The webinar will be available in three business days.

<https://www.dibbleinstitute.org/free-resources/webinars/>

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Second Wednesday Webinar

March 11, 2020

Update on the Mind Matters Evaluation

With

Becky Antle, MSSW, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Social Work and University Scholar at the
University of Louisville Kent School of Social Work and Marriage
and Family Therapy Program