

ADVOCACY

People First of Toledo Monthly Newsletter



**People First
of
Toledo**

How Poverty Affects Disability

By Quinn Thomas

Poverty is the state of being poor. That means less access to necessary things. There's a legal definition of poverty for the United States, which is \$15,060 for a single person in 2024. This line has been widely criticized. The standards for it were developed in the 1960s and assume that food is 1/3 of a family's expenses. Most people studying poverty now accept that the US is much poorer than officially stated.

Even with this flawed measure, 17.6% of disabled people are considered poor-- compared to 8.2% of abled people. This makes us more than twice as likely to experience poverty. Why?

Disability causes poverty, and poverty causes

UPCOMING EVENTS

AUTISTIC ADULT NIGHT

August 2, 5:30-8:00, at Forestview Lanes. \$10 for bowling and cornhole.

PROJECT STIR

August 7-9, 7:00-3:00, location TBD. Ages 16+.

CANDIDATE FORUM

August 8, 4:30-7:00, at the Ability Center. Concerning local and state candidates.

VOTER FORUM

August 20, 6:00-8:00, at Maumee Public Library. Concerning federal issues.

ONE-DAY CONFERENCE

November 8, 9:00-5:15, at the University of Toledo Lancelot Thompson Student Union.

disability. This is a cycle. It costs more to be disabled because we have to pay for extra medical care and equipment. A disabled person may need to spend more money on accessibility features for their house, car, clothes, technology, and even their job. They may face higher costs for health insurance solely due to their disability. They may need to pay for specialized services, such as an interpreter or therapist. A power wheelchair alone can cost more than a new car.

Disabled people are also more likely to be unemployed and underemployed. This can be due to a lack of supports or outright discrimination. Additionally, there is a wage gap. Disabled workers make 74 cents for every dollar a non-disabled worker earns.

There are also asset limits to SSI. People risk losing benefits if they ever acquire more than \$2000. SSI is a crucial benefit linked to essential

disability services and even healthcare. Losing it is not an option for most people.

Having a disability makes working and getting an education harder, due to our inaccessible world. A good job and a decent education are the main ways to escape poverty.

Being poor itself leads to worse health outcomes. 29%-- nearly a third-- of disabled people on Medicare have skipped doses, reduced dosages, or not filled prescriptions altogether due to the high cost of their medicine. Not taking your meds as they are prescribed is not good for you.

Poor nutrition, unsafe living conditions, hard labor, added stress, and insufficient medical care also contribute to more poor people becoming disabled.

All of this together is how the cycle keeps running.

OUR NEXT MEETING

August 15th, 6:00-7:30, virtually on Zoom or in-person at the Holland Library in Community Room B. Meeting dues are \$5 or \$50 for twelve months.

Ohio State Representative Michele Grim will speak on her role as a state legislator and on various issues pertaining to our community.