

Difference Maker

214

Resource Guide

The Backstory:

Share with your students a little about the family that lived here. They were a family of 6, Mom, Dad, 3 brothers and 1 sister. They lived in Orange County and the children attended school every day just like you. No one knew that they lived in a motel but every day after school the kids would come back to this room. This is where they did their homework, ate dinner and slept every night.

Questions or thoughts for the students to consider:

1. What do you notice about the room?

*Did you notice there was no kitchen? Where would you store or cook your food?

The family that lived here used a cooler to keep a few things cold and a hot plate to heat up their meals.

* Did you notice that there was no table or desk?

The family ate on T.V. trays on the beds and did homework on top of a book on the floor.

2. Where do you think everyone slept?

The parents would sleep in one of the beds and the other bed was taken apart so that 2 of the kids could sleep on the mattress and the other 2 could sleep on the box spring.

3. Do you think all of your clothes could fit in one storage container, like the clear ones you saw in the room?

Each person in this family only had one bin to keep all their stuff in.

4. If you needed some quiet time or time to yourself where would you go?

The family used headphones with a walkman to listen to music or drown out noise. (You might want to find a picture of a Walkman to show the students so they better understand).

5. Imagine having only one bathroom for 6 people. What do think the kids had to do to get ready for school in the morning with only one bathroom?

Everyone had to wake up at different times and only got a short amount of time in the bathroom to get ready. Some of the kids had to wake up extra early so that they could all get to school in time.

6. Would you invite a friend over?

The children never invited friends over because there was no space to accommodate anyone else.

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[take it deeper]

Statistics and information for homeless families in Orange County:

Currently, Orange County has a population of over 3.15 million.

Over **28,000 students** in Orange County were identified as homeless. There are many more that are unidentified due to embarrassment and fear.

Most of the students identified were Pre-K through 5th grade. A smaller percentage were in 6th-8th grade.

Some of the reasons that families experience homelessness are:

- Lack of income (job loss or unemployment)
- Single parent homes
- Family violence in the home
- Parent Disability(ex. car accident)
- Cost of living is too high. Rent exceeds 50% of family gross (before taxes) monthly income.

Want to cultivate more empathy? The gate to empathy is experience.

- HUNGER - What's the longest you've ever gone without a meal? How might being hungry affect other parts of your life? Choose to skip candy & desserts, and have a simple dinner as a family (most of the world eats rice and beans as their most common meal). Pray for the children who are hungry. "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat..." (Matt. 25:35)
- SLEEP - If you suddenly had to leave your home, where would you and your family go? What would you take with you? Choose to sleep on the floor tonight. Pray for the families who may not have a comfortable bed to sleep in tonight. "I was a stranger and you invited me in ..." (Matt. 25:35)
- CLOTHES - How many different sets of clothes do you have? Is that a lot or a little? Choose to wear the same clothes you wore yesterday. Pray for the families who are in need of clothing to keep them warm. "I need clothes and you clothed me..." (Matt. 25:36)
- SICKNESS/DISOURAGEMENT - When has someone helped you when you were going through a difficult time? Think of someone who is going through a difficult time and write an encouraging note to them. (I was sick and you looked after me..." (Matt. 25:36)