




CAMPAIGN TO END CHILD POVERTY

The League of Women Voters of Ashland & Bayfield
Counties



STARTING AT MARQUETTE



in 2014

2 FAITH-BASED NETWORKS

* WISDOM



* Wisconsin
Council of
Churches



AND 2 POLICY GROUPS

* Kids Forward

(Formerly the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families)



* Citizen Action of Wisconsin Education Fund



HOSTED A PATH BREAKING 2 YEAR CONVERSATION ON POVERTY

- * 24 major forums at churches & other religious settings
- * In every region of Wisconsin
- * Over 1,200 participants



*FRAME PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, STEVENS
POINT*

WE DUG INTO THE FACTS

- * who is poor
- * how prevalent is poverty
- * racial inequality
- * causes of poverty
- * history of efforts to reduce poverty



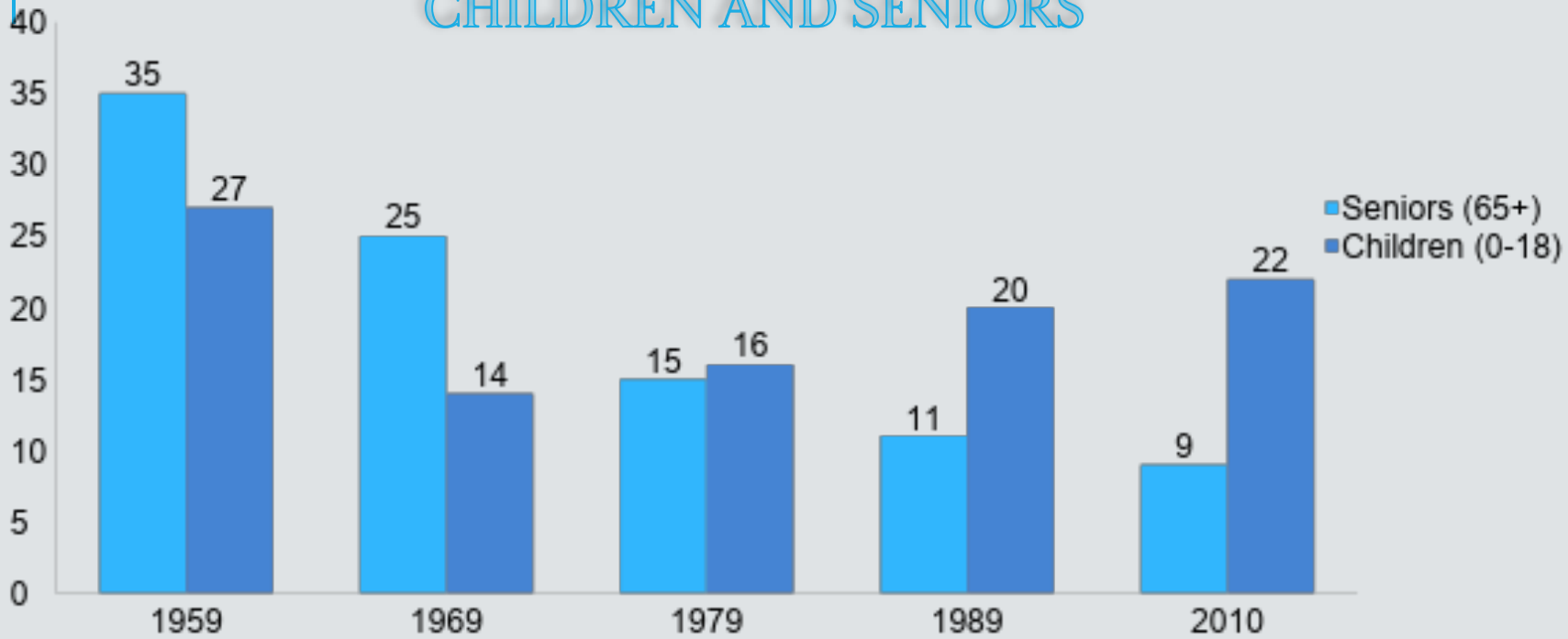
WE DISCOVERED THAT CHILDREN ARE NOW THE POOREST AMERICANS

- * in the 1950s seniors were the poorest group
- * **children were the second poorest group**
- * poverty for both was cut dramatically by public investments
- * **investments in seniors continued....**
- * investments in children tapered off....
- * **seniors now have the lowest rate of poverty**
- * but children are the poorest group in America today



% POVERTY OVER TIME: 1959-2010

CHILDREN AND SENIORS



IN DISCUSSIONS ACROSS THE SPECTRUM OF FAITHS



Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Door County

we found that child poverty is expanding in every region of Wisconsin

Free or Reduced-Price School Meal Eligibility

2003-2004

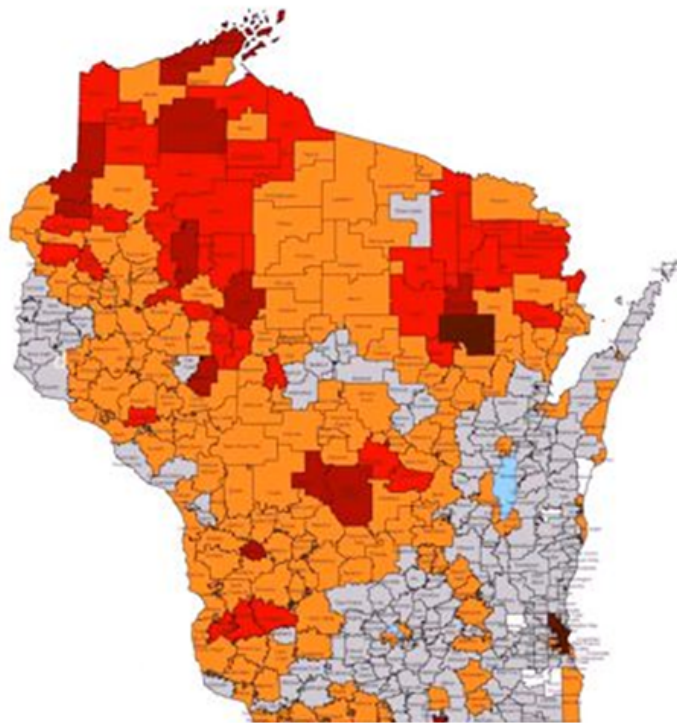


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Free or Reduced-Price School Meal Eligibility

2013-2014

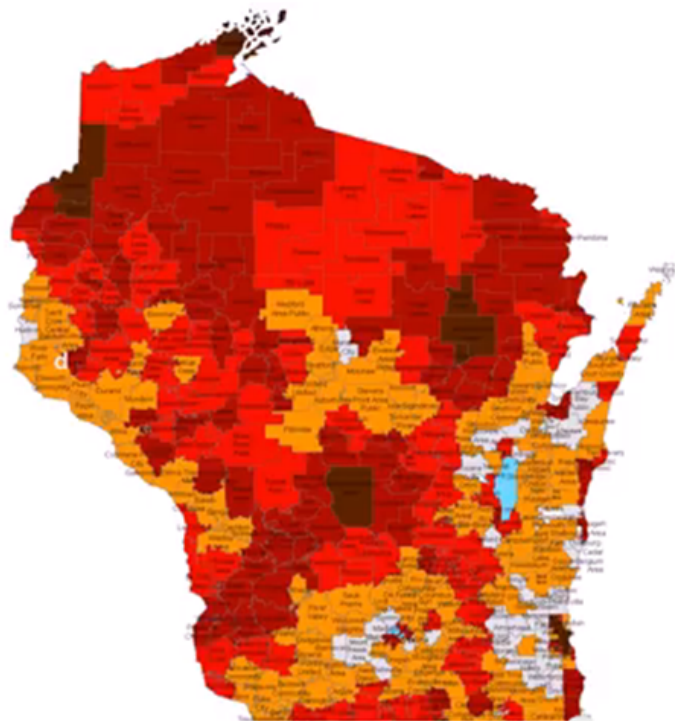


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WE FOUND RACIAL DISPARITIES ARE DRAMATIC BETWEEN OUR WISCONSIN KIDS

In WISCONSIN... compared to white kids

- * African American kids are almost 5x more likely to be poor
- * Latino kids are 3x more likely to be poor
- * Native American kids are 4x more likely to be poor
- * ...and the poverty rate for our African American kids is 8% above the national average for black child poverty



IN ADDITION, WE LEARNED THAT:

- 1) children are the poorest segment of Wisconsin
- 2) Wisconsin has among the worst racial disparities
- 3) pulling children out of poverty makes the biggest difference in life prospects
- 4) to help children you must help their families

WE REACHED AGREEMENT ON CAUSES



- * high rates of poverty are **not** a result of individual moral failings
- * **kids are clearly not responsible for their own plight**
- * poverty is a result of **human-made** economic and social structures

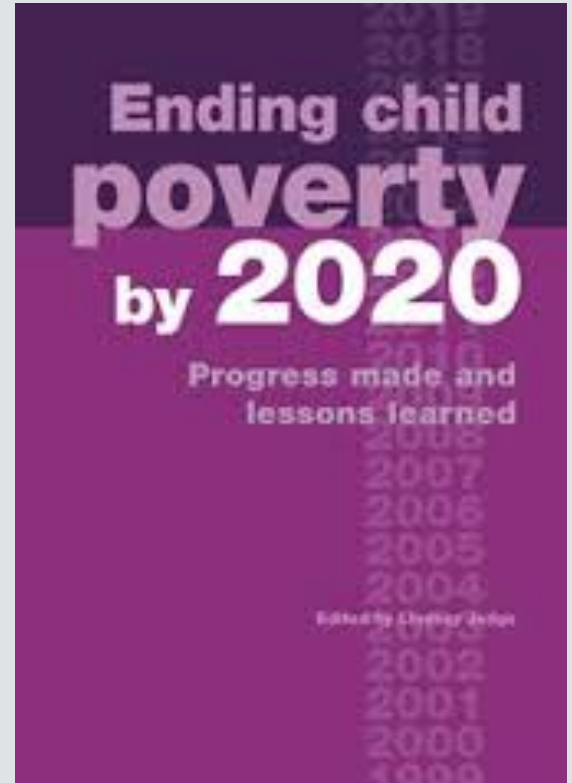
“Poverty is not an accident.
Like slavery and apartheid,
it is man-made and can be
removed by the actions of
human beings.”



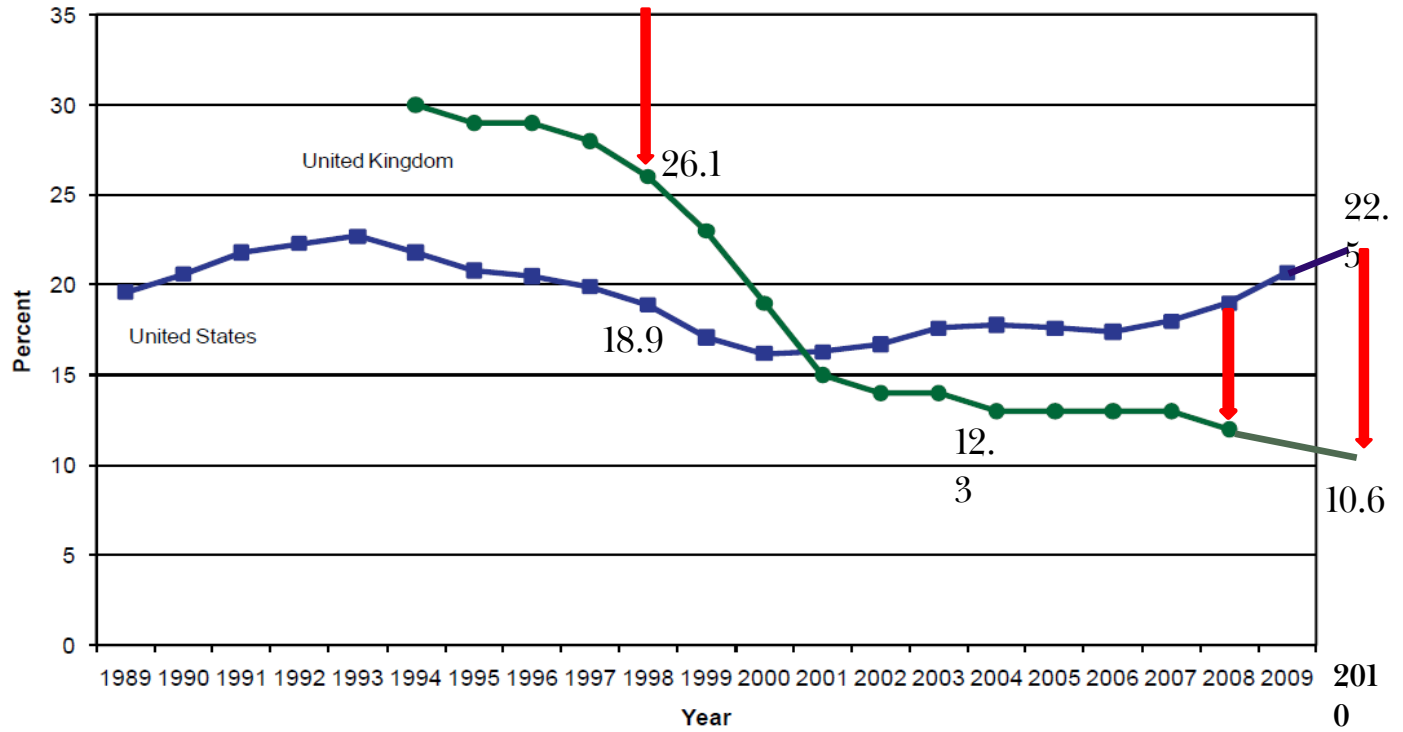
-- Nelson Mandela

WE WERE INSPIRED BY THE PROMISE OF A GOAL ORIENTED APPROACH

- * Great Britain adopted the national goal of eliminating child poverty by the year 2020
- * **evidence-based strategies were adopted up to the scale of the problem**
- * a robust evaluation and tracking system was adopted to:
 - * **evaluate progress in real time**
 - * **identify what is working**
 - * . . . and what is not
 - * . . . and recommend policy shifts



WHAT THE BRITISH EXPERIENCE SHOWS

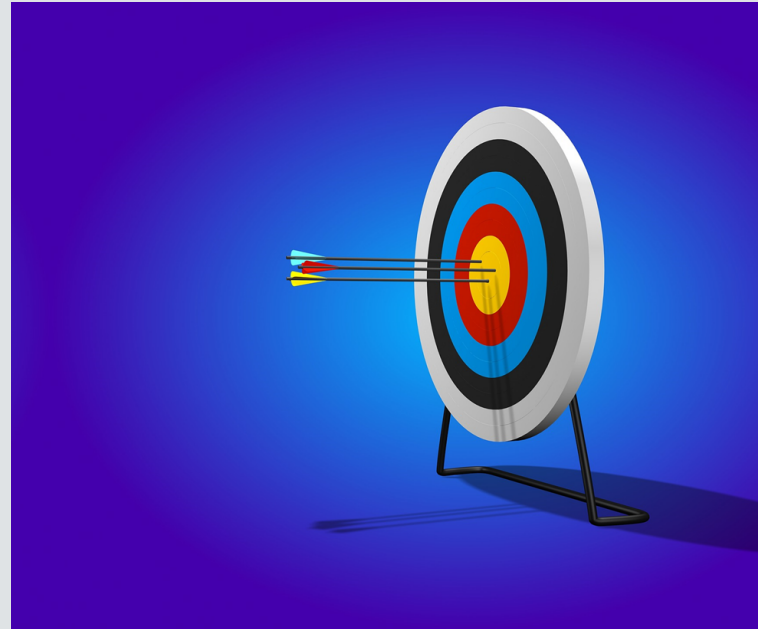


■ United States: Percent all persons under 18 years below official US Poverty Line, 1989-2009 (about 35 percent of median income in 2000)
● United Kingdom: Percent of U.K. children below the absolute poverty threshold, 1989-2008 (about 60 percent of median income in 1998-99)

SMEEDING T, WALDFOGEL J.
 FIGHTING POVERTY IN THE US
 &UK: AND UPDATE. 2010.
 CRIBB J, JOYCE R, PHILLIP D.
 LIVING STANDARDS, POVERTY AND
 INEQUALITY IN THE UK: 2012 . IFS
 COMMENTARY C124.

CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES

1. Set child poverty reduction goals, equity goals, and timelines.

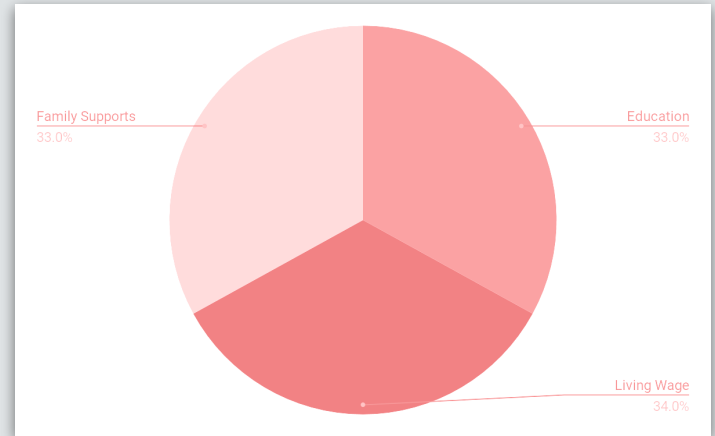




2. Develop accountability mechanisms:

A robust and independent tracking and evaluation capacity, trusted by all sides, which will make clear assessments of what is working, and what needs to change (e.g. the creation of a Legislative Child Poverty Bureau).

3. IMPLEMENT MULTI-SECTOR, EVIDENCE BASED STRATEGIES AT THE SCALE CAPABLE OF ACHIEVING THE POVERTY REDUCTION GOAL.



THESE MULTI-SECTOR, EVIDENCE BASED STRATEGIES INCLUDE

A. Employment and Income:

Help people get well-paying jobs.



Increase public investment in underfunded stages of education, particularly in the early years.



C. STRENGTHENING FAMILIES:

Deepen
relationships and
build social capital.



PRIORITY 4

Measure progress and adjust as necessary.

