

Bridges Out of Poverty

Written by Dr. Ruby Payne, Bridges Out of Poverty is a framework that helps businesses, churches, schools, social service organizations, government services, and individuals address poverty in a comprehensive way. Oriented around four lenses (individual, organizational, community, and policy), it examines poverty using concepts of class, hidden rules, language, and mental models.

Focusing on the individual lens, this session will examine how our own experiences and ideas create mental models that influence how we interact with people experiencing poverty. Attendees will learn about hidden rules, language, and client experience. Additionally, learners will gain an understanding of community conditions faced by individuals and families experiencing poverty by examining social determinants of health, housing/homelessness, and trauma.

At the end of the session, attendees will:

1. Be able to identify their own mental models and how they influence interactions
2. Understand the concepts of hidden rules that often shape our experiences
3. How language differs based on experiences
4. Develop a high level understanding of challenges in communities
5. Develop a high level understanding of how our physical health is dictated by our experiences

This session is four hours. It can be done in one session or broken into two – two hour sessions, but this is not preferable.

Bio of the trainer:

Jen Koppel, MHA, BA, currently serves as the Program Lead, Path to Zero at Community Solutions, International. She recently served as the Manager of Vulnerable Populations Programs at Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health and prior to that she led the Lancaster County Homelessness Coalition for 11 years and has served as Deputy Director of Administration for the County of Lancaster's Behavior Health and Developmental Services. Her 30 years of community service experience in Lancaster County government, non-profit, and health system organizations, has provided her with a unique perspective on delivering services successfully within the community. She has been recognized at the White House for transforming homelessness systems in Lancaster County and is the recipient of the Isaiah 61 Restorer of the City award. In 2018 she was appointed to the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency board by Governor Tom Wolf where she still currently serves and was recently re-nominated by Governor Wolf for a second term in November 2022. She is a founding board member of the Friends of Donegal and recently elected to the boards of Lancaster-Lebanon Habitat for Humanity and The Lancaster County Food Hub. Jen has been invited as a presenter at various conferences and has served as a consultant on homeless services to communities across the country. She also guest lectures on poverty, homelessness, and social determinants of health at her alma mater, Millersville University.

