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Poverty Stricken Students

Idaho has one of the highest poverty rates for people between the ages of eighteen to twenty-four in the nation. I believe this is true because of the relatively small population of the state combined with the high number of colleges and universities. Thus, meaning that people in that particular age range will most likely be students. If they are not college students, they will, in most cases be high school grads joining the work force and making an average of \$27,000 (BeSmart) per year, (remember this is an average). Another contributing factor is that a large percent of Idaho high school graduates do not go on to or complete their higher education. And those who are attending college neither have the time or the skills to participate in a job that pays more than minimum wage. Meaning that while they attend college (which is typically between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five to twenty-six) they will be making less than \$20,000 per year.

There are a few things that could help render this problem. Such as, a state wide program implemented in high schools that teach kids about the importance of completing a higher education. The program should show the statistics of salaries per year as well as speak about the importance of being educated and becoming a well rounded person. Increasing the states minimum wage will also help the college students and high school grads get out of poverty.

Another major issue that should be put on an agenda would be to educate persons between the ages of sixteen to twenty about the importance and danger of good and bad credit. The reason I say that we should teach kids as soon as sixteen about credit is because once they turn eighteen they are bombarded with letters telling them that they can have credit lines

anywhere from \$200-\$5,000. If we put off teaching them about credit until they were eighteen, it would be far too late. And we should continue teaching about the importance of good credit because when those sixteen year olds become older and begin to get into a position in which they will have the opportunity to purchase a home, they will need to know that it is a necessity to have good credit in order to function in today's society.

A good program that I can think of is something that I would call the "Apprentice Workshop." I would structure it so that college students as well as high school grads, could for minimum wage be an apprentice to someone who makes a salary that is well out of poverty level. These programs could be sponsored by the state and associated with types of jobs that someone could perform on their own once they were properly trained, such as insurance agents, or car salesmen, computer technicians, pet groomer, secretaries, management positions, retail sales, etc. This program would help by giving individuals the essentials needed to get a good job/career before they typically would if they didn't attend college, and it would give college graduates a great job as soon as they graduate.

As a senior in high school, I am going to be facing some of these situations. I will try to keep out of poverty by staying at my parents' house through college free of expense, working through the summer, and shooting for scholarships. If I do go into poverty while I am in college, I will be able to climb my way out with a degree that I will work hard to earn, which will help me get a good job and function successfully in society.

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Work Cited

BeSmart. 2005. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. 21 Mar. 2005

<<http://www.besmart.com>>.