

Future Leaders Town Hall *Arizona's Vulnerable Populations*

Resiliency: the ability to become strong, healthy, or successful again after something bad happens.



Facts to consider when discussing vulnerable populations:

Educational opportunities

- Quality early education is key to later success.
- Education is the key to employment opportunity.
- Many veterans face challenges adjusting to civilian life, including navigating educational opportunities after high school.
- The path to education after high school is especially challenging for homeless children and those leaving the foster care system.

Employment opportunities

- Under-employment can leave people as vulnerable as unemployment.
- Vulnerability is impacted by where you live, what opportunities you have, and the career choices you make.

“As more tasks move online, it hollows out the offline options. A lot of employers don’t accept offline job applications. It means if you don’t have the Internet, you could be really isolated.”

Edward Wyatt, New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/19/technology/a-push-to-connect-millions-who-live-offline-to-the-internet.html>

Access to health care, including behavior/mental health care

- Access to affordable, quality health care is a significant challenge for Arizona’s vulnerable populations.
- The Arizona Department of Health Services identified insurance coverage for behavioral health care and access to behavioral health care to be the top health priority facing the people of Arizona at this time.
- Mental illness and substance abuse are among the most devastating health conditions that vulnerable populations are at risk of experiencing.

Actions or programs that create stronger more resilient families and neighborhoods

- Resilience to adversity is a key to family health and well being.
- Family stress undermines positive parenting.
- Early intervention and the promotion of positive relationships and healthy relationship skills are keys to building family resilience.

“Call it a clan, call it a network, call it a tribe, call it a family: whatever you call it, whoever you are, you need one.” - Jane Howard, author

Access to resources

- Vulnerability goes beyond finances.
- Rural and remote areas lack essential services, including high speed Internet.
- Transportation is key to accessibility issues.
- Lack of a savings account undermines financial stability.
- High interest loan practices remain widespread.
- 30% of Arizona households are considered ‘asset poor’ (the inability of a household to utilize their savings and assets to weather an unexpected financial crisis for up to three months).

Review the entire Background Report, which was prepared by Arizona State University and the Morrison Institute, at www.aztownhall.org/Upcoming_Town_Hall.