

Four things

1 THE CRISIS

One in six people in the U.S. live in poverty. The divide between lower income populations and the middle-to-upper income populations is growing, and not just in numbers. We need a **relational and smart solution** to these problems, which is why we believe Circles can make a real and lasting difference in our communities.

2 THE STATS

Nationally, 15% or 45 million people live at or below the income limit for the Federal Poverty Guidelines (\$24,300 for a family of four in 2017). However, many communities across the country have **poverty rates over 30%**.

3 THE CIRCLE

The Circles program supports families from poverty to stability. Each Circle is comprised of a carefully matched Circle Leader (a family or individual with low income) and Circle Allies (middle to upper-income individuals). The Circle Leaders identify goals and with the support of the Allies they develop a plan to reach them. Each week, **Circles Groups meet** to discuss strategies for attaining prosperity and to provide peer support.

4 TRANSFORMATION

- Encouraging and supporting families as they work to emerge from poverty.
- Empowering people from every economic class to eliminate poverty.
- Giving families essential tools to get out of poverty: training, social capital and human connections.
- Helping **change systemic barriers** and policies that lock people in poverty.



How Circles works

GOALS & FUTURE PLANS

Circle Leaders go through a 12-week class to prepare an individualized economic stability plan. People begin by reconnecting to their dreams for their family's future. Through SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) goal setting and budgeting work, they begin to outline their plans to bring these dreams into reality.

ALLIES & WEEKLY MEETINGS

Community volunteers are trained as Allies who support Circle Leaders to achieve their goals. Circle Leaders lead their Circle by convening regular meetings and asking Allies for what they need to help them become economically stable.

BIG VIEW

Big View is a monthly meeting focused on educating the community about barriers such as the Cliff Effect that occur when people leave welfare and other subsidy programs. Policy makers are educated to the benefits of providing a pro-rated exit plan for all subsidy programs in order to allow people to afford paying for new health insurance, childcare, etc. with their new earned income.

RESOURCE TEAMS

Circles is driven by volunteer Resource Teams that are supported by certified Circles staff. The Resource Teams ensure that all features of Circles are fully functioning to support families in achieving their economic stability goals. The teams also work to fully utilize volunteers without duplicating any existing services.

