

Ty Ankrom's Here's What I Think ...

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, from the 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 9.7 percent of all families in Pickaway County had an income that fell below the poverty line. In families with a female householder, no husband present, that number jumped to 34 percent.



Further, for all families with children from birth to 17, 25.8 percent live in poverty. For single-mother households, 42.9 percent of children do.

Statistics like these make many of us wonder how we can help the children and young adults in our community.

Through a program called Bridges out of Poverty, based on the work of Dr. Ruby Payne, county educators were invited to take part in the first of a three-phase effort to create self-sufficiency in Pickaway County.

Organized by the Pickaway

County Community Foundation, the Pickaway County Community Action Organization and the United Way of Pickaway County, the goal of the training was to discuss poverty: What does it look like, how is it affecting Pickaway County and how can a more prosperous community for all be created.

Led by Jeffrey Diver, executive director of SELF, a community action agency in Butler County, and a certified life trainer for Payne's aha process, more than 30 participants began the process of understanding poverty and the unwritten rules associated with it, said Andrew Binegar, executive director of Pickaway County Community Action.

Several participants attended the program to see how they could help their students or their staff members.

"It was insightful about how people of poverty live and cope. Made me certainly think a little about my classroom and homework expectations and how I may need to think differently about them," said Julie Rine, a second-grade teacher at Logan Elm's



March 5, 2017

Washington Elementary.

Jonathan Davis, superintendent of Circleville City Schools, said that he hoped the training would allow him to provide tools and perspective to his staff members.

"I plan to work with my team to figure out how we can provide more proper training for our staff to better serve our students and community in this regard. I have a wonderful staff that is extremely compassionate and I want to further empower them with information so they can provide even more help to students and families."

Jonathan said he would encourage others to take the training.

"The more we can work together on this issue collaboratively, the better chance we have of changing the trend."

Jeffrey Diver was the program facilitator for the Bridges out of Poverty training held last week at the ESC.



Ty Ankrom is superintendent of the Pickaway County Educational Service Center. He can be reached at ty.ankrom@pickawayesc.org.