



because  
you are afraid to love...

i am alone

## poverty...

is a state of being in serious need. It is a circumstance without the potential for good health and normal development.



## mental retardation...

is unusual difficulty in learning. A person who is mentally retarded is relatively ineffective in applying whatever he does learn to the problems of ordinary living. He needs special training and guidance to make the most of his capacities, whatever they may be.



## Loneliness...

is a common experience to millions of Americans who do not share in the wealth of the country. For years, they were forgotten, ignored. Today, however, countless of their fellow-citizens recognize the existence of their poverty. Few, however, realize that poverty leads to mental retardation more often than any disease or any other known cause. Fewer still come to understand the loneliness of the serious need of the mentally retarded person living in Appalachia or the ghettos of America.

Poverty — whether in a rural or urban setting — brings together all the necessary ingredients for mental retardation. Chances are, the child born in poverty will encounter more obstacles to his intellectual development in the first few years of his life than a middle class youngster will face during his entire life. Even before birth, the basis for retardation may be established for the ghetto baby if his mother does not receive proper prenatal care. What, after the disadvantaged child does enter the world, are some of the many things with which he must cope — often at the same time?

- MALNUTRITION - **no lunch at school**
- POOR PUBLIC EDUCATION - **no regular teacher**
- ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS - **no playgrounds**
- CULTURAL DEPRIVATION - **no crayons**
- HEALTH HAZARDS - **no toothbrush**
- POOR MEDICAL CARE - **no glasses**
- PERSONAL IMMOBILITY - **no transportation**

For centuries poverty has been a revolving door, a door frequently opening to mental retardation. Society has paid the price through loss of invaluable human resources. Today . . . we know that this need not always be the case. The cycle can be stopped.

**... by upgrading the socio-economic status of the deprived segment of our population, there could be a 50% reduction in the total cases of mental retardation."**

Margaret I. Liston  
President's Committee on Mental Retardation

To eliminate the tremendous waste of human potential caused by poverty, each citizen must face two realities:

**existing mental retardation in poverty areas must be confronted and dealt with . . . and . . . poverty must be eliminated.**

Throughout the country special government agencies and over 1450 local Associations for Retarded Children are working daily to improve facilities and services for mentally retarded people. Through their efforts, more and more citizens are realizing that, although mentally retarded people do not have the capacities for achievement that people of normal intelligence have, they can be productive and happy human beings who are contributing to society. The President's Committee on Mental Retardation reports that 75% of these people could become self-supporting if given the right kind of training early enough. Another 10-15% could become partially self-supporting. To achieve this goal, it is necessary for concerned citizens, special interest groups, and all levels of government to cooperate to improve residential services, to create broader educational opportunities, to encourage and increase employment opportunities, and to increase community services and other programs for mentally retarded people now living in depressed areas.

For the first time in history, a nation has the available resources to stop the revolving door of poverty and eliminate the major cause of mental retardation. The first step in achieving this goal has been taken. In 1964 the United States Congress initiated a war on poverty. It must be a non-partisan effort which will continue and grow on all levels of government and through a wide variety of community groups. As Rodger Hurley, noted researcher in the field of poverty and mental, retardation, states:

***"... no spectacular breakthrough can be made until the whole structure of the culture of poverty is destroyed... No amount of research will (end) the conditions of human suffering of poverty.. We do not need a more sophisticated, academic understanding of the exact way poverty breaks the human spirit. We need to eliminate poverty."***





Throughout Minnesota numerous private and governmental agencies are operating to combat poverty. Among them are the Indian Community Action Agencies; the Head Start Program; Migrants, Incorporated; Community Action Programs (Councils); the Minnesota Department of Public Welfare; and the Office of Economic Opportunity. There are many, many more.

**If you would like to learn more about the relationship between poverty and mental retardation - if you would like to utilize the services of the specific agencies working with poverty programs in your area — if you would like to volunteer your time or make a financial contribution to these groups or to the work of the Minnesota Association for Retarded Children, please write or call us.**

People need not be trapped in the revolving door of poverty. You can help make it a door opening to a brighter future.



**MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION FOR  
RETARDED CHILDREN, INC.**

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