



Not by Bread Alone: Mothers' Strategic Pursuit of Education to Meet Basic Needs

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Maslow's hierarchy of needs

<https://www.thoughtco.com/maslows-hierarchy-of-needs-4582571>

METHODS

32 in-depth interviews with single mother participants of The House of Educational Attainment (THEA)

Participants were recruited at events, via email blasts from THEA staff, and snowball sampling



FINDINGS

100% of the participants in this study were housing insecure or homeless prior to THEA

Must qualify for Section 8 housing

Students took a risk to become residents



FINDINGS

Debbie Allen, a black mother of three stated, “I never would have thought about, to be honest, goin’ back to school until I became homeless. I had to have some kind of way to have something for my kids.”

Tashia Powell, a black mother of one son argued that “I went through this program and tried to change and be a better person for my son ... to be a good role model. I didn’t want to be a bad influence. Education is the key.”



CONCLUSION

THEA is not a panacea, but provides an avenue of **hope** through which mothers can meet their basic needs and concurrently earn credentials.

Maslow argues, “the easiest technique for releasing the organism from the bondage of the lower, more selfish needs is to gratify them”—thus, if we want families to be self-sufficient we must create pathways to achieve success beyond the lowest levels of the needs hierarchy—we must not expect them to live by bread alone.

Acknowledgements: Grace Stephens and Gina Vandivier.