In March 2016, The Salvation Army commissioned a poll to gain insights into the American public’s perception of poverty. The poll was conducted by Research Now, a global leader in data collection, and canvassed 1,226 people (18+) in every state in the country, with a +/- 3 percent margin of error.

**PERCEPTIONS OF POVERTY**

More than half of Americans believe nonprofits and social service providers should help people living in poverty.

- **76.6%** believe it is difficult or somewhat difficult to escape poverty.
- **89.5%** believe poverty is a generational issue.
- **39.9%** believe the main cause of poverty is laziness and a lack of work ethic.
- **55.2%** of Americans personally know someone they consider to be poor or living in poverty.
- **30.7%** of Americans have received financial assistance.
  - **42.1%** of people ages 25-34
  - **37.7%** of women
  - **35.2%** of people who make between $25K and $49.9K

Above the national average, **60.8%** of respondents in the Midwest personally know someone they consider to be poor or living in poverty.

The majority of Americans want presidential candidates to have specific plans to combat poverty.

- **79.3%**

“WE ARE DELIGHTED TO SUPPORT THE SALVATION ARMY’S EFFORT TO COMBAT NEED BY PROVIDING RESEARCH TO BETTER UNDERSTAND AMERICANS’ PERCEPTIONS ABOUT POVERTY.”

– John Rothwell, Research Now, President and COO