

**Rights and Responsibilities:
Meeting the Educational Needs of Homeless Children & Youth**

Homeless Education Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

PRESENTATION AGENDA

Understanding Homelessness
Definition of Homeless
Homeless Students Rights
Access to Services
LEA/Liaison Responsibilities

Possible Causes of Homelessness

High Levels of Poverty	
Lack of Affordable Housing	Decline in Public Assistance
↓	
Unemployment	
Eviction	Foreclosure
↓	
Divorce, Domestic Violence or Lack of Family Support	
Teen Pregnancy	Cost of Child Care
↓	
Chronic Health Problems & Lack of Affordable Health Care	
Drug & Alcohol Addiction	Mental Health Issues

Barriers to Homeless Education

- Enrollment requirements
- High mobility
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of school supplies, clothing, etc.
- Poor health, fatigue, hunger, anxiety/trauma
- Lack of awareness
- For unaccompanied youth
 - Lack of parent/guardian
 - Need for employment
 - Credit/ partial credit accrual policies
 - Authority Involvement

Impact on Education

- Homeless students are twice as likely to repeat a grade in school, be expelled or suspended.¹
- Within a single year, **97 % of children who are homeless move up to three times** and 40 % attend two different schools.
- With each change in schools, a student is set back academically by an average of four to six months.
- **Less than one out of four homeless youth graduate from high school!**²



¹ "America's Youngest Outcasts", www.honolulu.gov/childdevelopment.nsf, 2009
² The National Center on Family Homelessness, The Cost of Homelessness, December 2012

Impact on Medical Health

Homeless children are more likely to experience health related problems as opposed to their housed peers.

- Two times more likely to experience **childhood illnesses** as other children
- Four times more likely to need **special care at birth**
- Two times more likely to have **ear infections**
- Five times more likely to have **diarrhea and stomach problems**
- Four times as likely to be **asthmatic**
- Two times as likely to be **hospitalized**
- Higher incidences of **lice and scabies**
- Higher rates of elevated **blood lead levels**

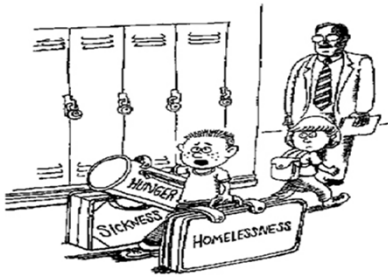
Impact on Mental Health

Homeless children suffer from stressors that negatively affect their psychosocial well-being as opposed to their housed peers.

- 74% worry about where they will live
- 58% worry that they will have no place to sleep
- 87% worry that something will happen to their family
- 25% have witnessed acts of violence within their family
- 1/5 of homeless children 3-6 years of age have emotional problems serious enough to require professional care
- 47% of homeless school age children have problems such as anxiety, depression; compared to 18% of other children
- Less than 33% of homeless children receive mental health treatment

"America's Youngest Outcasts" - www.homelessschoolchildrenamerica.org 2010

"Could someone help me with these? I'm late for math class."



McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

- In January 2002, President Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and re-authorized the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act for Homeless Children and Youth.
- All homeless school-aged children are entitled to the **same free and appropriate public education** that is provided to non-homeless students.
- All schools are required to remove barriers to the enrollment, attendance, and academic success of homeless students.

Definition of Homeless

The McKinney-Vento Act defines a "homeless" student as one between 0 to 22 years of age, who lacks a **fixed, regular, and adequate** nighttime residence, and may include

- Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason ("doubling up")
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds due to the lack of adequate alternative accommodations
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Living in a public or private place not designed for humans to live
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or a similar setting
- Abandoned, runaway or pushed-out youth or migratory children living in any of the above circumstances

Educational Rights

- ✓ Homeless children and youth have the right to enroll in school immediately
- ✓ If a student does not have immunizations, or immunization or medical records, the liaison must assist immediately in obtaining them and the student must be enrolled in the interim
- ✓ Enrolling schools must obtain school records from the previous school and students must be enrolled while records are obtained
- ✓ Districts must develop, review /revise policies to remove barriers to enrollment & create a Dispute Resolution Process

Unaccompanied Minor

A minor who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, and includes youth who have been abandoned, has been pushed out or is a runaway.

- Includes youth who have run away as well as those sent away.
- Some students become homeless with their families, but end up on their own due to lack of space in temporary accommodations or shelter policies.
- LEAs cannot require adult caretakers to obtain guardianship of an unaccompanied youth.
- Liaison can assist with enrollment.



Unaccompanied Minors: Rights

- o Enrollment without proof of guardianship
- o Assistance from the local liaison in
 - o selecting a school of attendance and enrolling
 - o receiving transportation to the school of origin
 - o resolving any disputes that arise
- o Can initiate the dispute resolution process for himself/herself
- o Student receives written notice in disputes
- o **Unaccompanied youth age 14 and over** have the right to access and consent to disclose their school records **and extends these rights to all caregivers.**
- o Eligible for CalFresh through the county welfare agency – no minimum age requirement.



School Selection

- o Under the law, a student is eligible to :
 - o Continue at their **School of Origin** (the school attended when permanently housed or the school in which they were last enrolled) for the duration of homelessness; OR
 - o Enroll in any public school that students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend (**School of Residence**)
- o Once the student is permanently housed, he/she may remain at the school of origin until the end of the school year.
- o Homeless students have the right to attend the next matriculating school (elementary to middle, middle to high school). Same attendance pattern as their housed peers.

Equal Access For All

- o Free and Reduced Lunch
- o Gifted and Talented
- o Special Education
- o Before and After School Programs
- o State Preschool & Head Start Programs
- o Tutoring
- o Participation in sports (incl. residency requirements)
- o Open Enrollment
- o Inter-district and Intra-district transfer permits

Support for Academic Success: Credit Accrual and School Climate

- LEAs must have procedures to ensure McKinney-Vento students receive appropriate full or partial credit, such as: consulting with prior school about **partial coursework completed; evaluating students' mastery of partly completed courses; offering credit recovery.** 11432(g)(1)(F)(ii); 11432(g)(6)(A)(x); Guidance O2
- LEAs help assist students with FAFSA
 - Complete the FAFSA earlier in the academic year.
 - Receive financial aid award letters earlier in the academic year so they can compare award letters, and choose the best fit college.
 - Submit homeless status determinations before the school year ends.

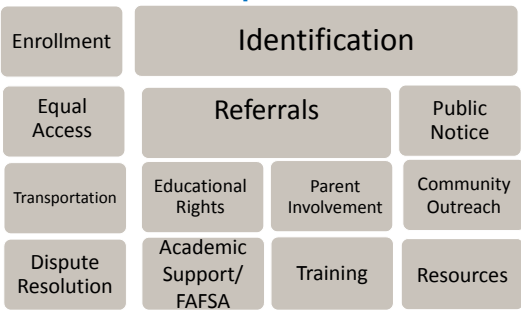
Critical Role of the Homeless Liaison

Every LEA must designate a liaison for students in homeless situations.

Responsibilities:

- Ensure that children and youth in homeless situations are identified
- Ensure that homeless students enroll in and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in school
- Link with educational services, including preschool and health services
- Inform parents/guardians of youth of their educational rights, including school-of-origin and transportation
- Post public notices of educational rights
- Establish dispute resolution policies
- Collaborate with programs and agencies in district and community

Homeless Liaison ~ Role and Responsibilities



Dispute Resolution

- If a dispute arises regarding school selection or enrollment, the school must **immediately enroll** the student pending the resolution of the dispute.
- The LEA must provide the parent with a **written explanation** of the enrollment decision as well as information regarding the LEA's appeal process per policy.
- The policy must **include information to appeal** to the county and the state.

More information available at
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs/cy/>

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of local liaison
Email and phone number for local liaison

Orange County Department of Education www.ocde.us/mv
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More information available at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs/cy/>

Questions?