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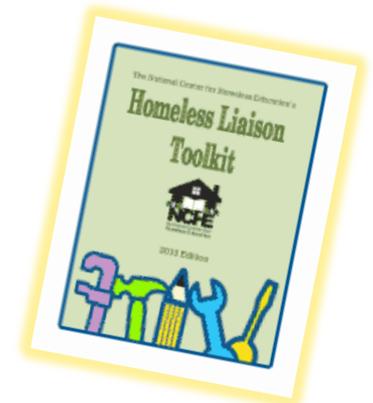
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# Get to Know NCHE



- \* NCHE is the U.S. Department of Education's homeless education technical assistance and information center
- \* NCHE has
  - \* A comprehensive website: [www.serve.org/nche](http://www.serve.org/nche)
  - \* A toll-free helpline: Call 800-308-2145 or e-mail [homeless@serve.org](mailto:homeless@serve.org)
  - \* A listserv: Visit [www.serve.org/nche/listserv.php](http://www.serve.org/nche/listserv.php) for subscription instructions
  - \* Free resources: Visit [www.serve.org/nche/products.php](http://www.serve.org/nche/products.php)
  - \* Homeless Liaison Toolkit (2013 edition): [http://center.serve.org/nche/pr/liaison\\_toolkit.php](http://center.serve.org/nche/pr/liaison_toolkit.php)



# McKinney-Vento and Young Homeless Children: Pop Quiz

## True or False

Local liaisons must ensure that young homeless children receive education services for which they are eligible.

Young homeless children must be enrolled immediately in preschool programs.

Federal provisions require collaboration among agencies, including school districts, to serve young homeless children.

School districts are required to collect data on numbers of preschool-aged homeless children.

# Importance of Preschool Services for Homeless Children

- \* Research in neuroscience indicates that poverty and stress in babies can irreversibly alter brain development.
- \* Early detection and intervention of developmental problems can impact future school success.
  - \* Preschool and other early childhood services can mitigate the impacts of homelessness and ensure that developmental and health problems are addressed early.

# McKinney-Vento and Young Homeless Children

- \* Local liaisons must ensure that homeless children receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and Even Start, and preschool programs administered by the school district.
- \* Local liaisons must provide homeless children with referrals to health care, dental, mental health, and other appropriate services.
- \* School districts may use subgrant funds to provide developmentally appropriate early childhood education programs for homeless children.

# McKinney-Vento and Young Homeless Children

- \* State Plans must establish procedures that ensure that homeless children have equal access to public preschool programs administered by the state education agency
- \* Tennessee State Plan: All LEAs must assure compliance with the provision to ensure that homeless children have access to the same public preschool programs administered by the SEA as provided to other children in the state.

# Allowable Uses of Title I, Part A Funds

- \* Preschool-aged homeless children are automatically eligible for Title I preschools.
  - \* School districts should prioritize access to Title I preschool programs for homeless preschool-aged children.
- \* School districts may utilize Title I, Part A funds set aside for homeless students to provide services for preschool-aged homeless children, such as
  - \* Screenings for developmental delays or
  - \* Developmentally appropriate educational activities.

# Data Collection

- \* School districts are required to collect data annually on number of preschool-aged homeless children (ages 3-5, not kindergarten) that are
  - \* Enrolled in public preschool programs and
  - \* Are served with subgrant funds in LEAs receiving subgrants.
- \* LEAs receiving subgrants must collect data on children (ages 0-2) who are served through the LEA subgrant.

# What This Means for School Districts

- \* School districts should make every effort to identify and serve preschool-aged homeless children.
- \* Preschool-aged homeless children should be enrolled immediately in programs in the district for which they are eligible even if the family does not have records.
- \* Because preschool is not considered compulsory education, programs that are at legal capacity are not required to enroll homeless children, but should prioritize them on a waiting list.
- \* The US Department of Education does not require school of origin transportation for preschool-aged homeless children; however, some SEAs and LEAs enable these children to continue in their programs despite a residential move that would affect enrollment.

# Importance of Collaboration

- \* **IDEA Part C** (Early Intervention) – requires representation of the homeless State Coordinator on the ICC; Child Find identifies and evaluates children with disabilities, including homeless children; **Part B** serves preschool-aged children with disabilities ages 3-5.
- \* **Head Start** and **Early Head Start** programs are required to serve young homeless children, prioritize them for enrollment, and enroll them even when records are not present
- \* **HUD** (Housing and Urban Development funded programs) are required to coordinate with school districts and Head Start programs

# Importance of Collaboration

- \* **Child Care and Development Fund** oversees grant funds to states for providing low-income working families with affordable, high-quality early care and after-school programs
- \* **Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program** fosters the implementation of evidence-based home visiting programs to improve outcomes for families who reside in at-risk communities.
- \* Both programs administered by the TN Department of Human Services <http://tn.gov/humanserv/index.html>

# To Dos for Local Liaisons

- \* Identify resources for preschool aged homeless children in your school district.
- \* Train school staff in identifying preschool-aged homeless children.
- \* Collect data on the number of preschool-aged homeless students.
- \* Discuss the needs of preschool-aged homeless children with your Title I coordinator and ensure that
  - \* Services are covered in the Part A set aside for homeless children and
  - \* Homeless children are prioritized for enrollment in Title I preschool programs.
- \* Link with other programs to create a coordinated approach to serving preschool-aged homeless children.

# McKinney-Vento and Young Homeless Children: Pop Quiz Review

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School districts are required to collect data on numbers of preschool-aged homeless children.

# McKinney-Vento and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth: Pop Quiz

## True or False

A youth can be eligible regardless of whether he/she was asked to leave the home or “chose” to leave.

A school district can not require a caregiver to obtain legal guardianship at any point prior to or following an unaccompanied homeless student’s enrollment.

An unaccompanied homeless youth can initiate the dispute resolution process for himself/herself.

Schools do not need to understand and/or agree with all aspects of a student’s home life to educate him/her.

# Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

- \* Multiple studies estimate that more than a million youth ages 12-17 will become unaccompanied homeless youth each year
- \* According to the McKinney-Vento Act, an unaccompanied homeless student is a child or youth “not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian”
- \* The Act refers to *physical custody*, not *legal custody*; in practical terms, this usually means that the student is living apart from his/her parent(s) or guardian(s)

# Steps for Identification

**Identification of Unaccompanied Homeless Youth involves a 2-step process:**

- \* 1) Does the student's living arrangement meet the McKinney-Vento Act's definition of homeless?
- \* 2) Once homelessness is determined, is the student unaccompanied

# Pathways to Being “On Your Own”

- \* Longstanding patterns of family conflict: blended family issues, pregnancy, sexual activity or orientation, school problems, alcohol/drug use
- \* Abuse and/or neglect within the home
- \* Parental incarceration, substance abuse, illness, hospitalization, or death

# Pathways (cont'd)

- \* Foster care issues: running away from a foster care placement, aging out of the foster care system; significant correlation between involvement with the child welfare system and experiencing homelessness as an adult
- \* Some students become homeless with their families, but end up on their own due to lack of space in temporary accommodations or shelter policies that prohibit adolescent boys

# Would You?

**If your family life was problematic, would you disclose this information in detail to a person you are just meeting?**

**Unaccompanied homeless students and/or parents may or may not wish to discuss or feel comfortable sharing issues occurring in their home life.**

# We might not know the details

- \* A youth can be eligible regardless of whether he/she was asked to leave the home or “chose” to leave
- \* Sometimes there is “more than meets the eye” for youth’s home life situations

# The School's Charge

- \* Schools first and foremost are educational agencies
- \* The school's primary responsibility and goal is to enroll and educate, in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act (*federal*); federal law supersedes state and local law
- \* Schools do not need to understand and/or agree with all aspects of a student's home life to educate him/her

# Barriers to Education

- \* Lack of stable housing (affects access to bathing facilities, laundry facilities, etc.)
- \* Lack of a parent or guardian (support, guidance, signing, etc.)
- \* Lack of school records and other paperwork
- \* Emotional crisis / Mental health issues
- \* Employment: Many are self-supporting and have to balance school and work

# Barriers (cont'd)

- \* Lack of transportation
- \* Lack of school supplies, clothing
- \* Fatigue, poor health, hunger (difficulty meeting basic needs)
- \* Credit accrual policies, attendance policies
- \* Concerns about being apprehended by authorities

# Provisions of MV Specific to UHY

- \* Enrollment without proof of guardianship
- \* Assistance from the local liaison in selecting a school of attendance and enrolling
- \* Assistance from the local liaison in receiving transportation to the school of origin
- \* Can initiate the dispute resolution process for himself/herself
- \* Assistance from the local liaison in resolving any disputes that arise
- \* Student receives written notice in disputes

# Strategies

- \* Provide awareness activities for school staff (*registrars, secretaries, counselors, social workers, nurses, teachers, bus drivers, administrators, truancy and attendance officers, security officers, etc.*) about the specific needs of runaway and homeless youth
- \* Develop relationships with dropout prevention programs, truancy officials, and other attendance officers. Many unaccompanied homeless youth are out of school!

# Strategies (cont'd)

- \* Community agencies and schools can work together in identifying eligible students; reach out to community agencies and ask them to be your “eyes and ears” in the community to support school efforts to reach unaccompanied homeless students
- \* Enlist other students to help spread the word
- \* Post outreach materials where unaccompanied homeless students may “hang out”, including laundromats, parks, campgrounds, skate parks, clubs/organizations

# Strategies (cont'd)

## **Be sensitive, honest, and trustworthy**

- \* Inform students up-front about the circumstances under which you may be required to report them to child welfare or law enforcement
- \* Keep in mind the challenges that unaccompanied homeless students are facing as you work with them and provide support as you are able
- \* Encourage unaccompanied homeless students to stay in school; support them and advocate for them in getting their education

# Remember!

- \* A school district can not require a caregiver to obtain legal guardianship at any point prior to or following an unaccompanied homeless student's enrollment
- \* A school district can not discontinue a student's enrollment due to an inability to identify a caregiver, guardian, or parent following enrollment or to produce guardianship or other paperwork

# McKinney-Vento and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth: Pop Quiz Review

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