Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness During COVID-19: A National Policy Perspective

Christina Dukes, Deputy Director for Partnerships and Policy National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)
cdukes@serve.org
About NCHE

NCHE operates the U.S. Department of Education’s technical assistance center for the federal Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program.

- Website: http://nche.ed.gov
- Helpline: 800-308-2145 or homeless@serve.org
- Products: https://nche.ed.gov/resources/
- Webinars: https://nche.ed.gov/group-training/
- Listserv: https://nche.ed.gov/resources/ (click Listserv tab)
- Twitter: @NCHEducation | Facebook: facebook.com/NCHEducation
Where We’re Headed

- Research and data on education and homelessness
- EHCY Program 101 (statute, funding, people, partners)
- Policy and funding levers for supporting students experiencing homelessness during the pandemic
- Q&A
Research and Data on Education and Homelessness
What do you think?

According to recent research from the University of Chicago, which of the following subpopulations of youth are at the highest risk for homelessness?

A. Low-income youth
B. LGBT youth
C. Youth of color (black/African American, Hispanic non-white)
D. Youth without a high school diploma or GED
E. Unmarried parenting youth
Education and Homelessness

Supporting educational attainment is an important strategy for preventing youth homelessness and equipping young people to make sustainable exits from homelessness.

Particular subpopulations are at higher risk for homelessness

- **346%**
  Youth with less than a high school diploma or GED had a 346% higher risk

- **162%**
  Youth reporting annual household income of less than $24,000 had a 162% higher risk

- **83%**
  Black or African American youth had an 83% higher risk

- **120%**
  LGBT youth had a 120% higher risk

- **33%**
  Hispanic, non-White youth had a 33% higher risk

- **200%**
  Unmarried parenting youth had a 200% higher risk

Findings from Voices of Youth Count, an initiative of Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago | voicesofyouthcount.org

*Youth Homelessness in America: National Estimates*
Homelessness and education have a bidirectional relationship. Stable housing supports greater educational attainment. Greater educational attainment supports access to the income and safety nets needed to exit homelessness.
Homelessness Among PreK-12 Students

Federal Data Summary School Years 2015-16 through 2017-18: Education for Homeless Children and Youth

U.S. public schools enrolled 1,508,265 children and youth (PreK-12) experiencing homelessness in the 2017-2018 school year.
EHCY Program 101
The McKinney-Vento Act

- The federal EHCY program is authorized by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (42 U.S.C. §11431 et seq).
- The Act establishes the definition of homelessness used by U.S. public schools and the educational rights of students experiencing homelessness.
- The EHCY program was appropriated at $106,500,000 for federal fiscal year 2021.
- Every state education department has a State Coordinator for Homeless Education and every school district has a local homeless education liaison.
- Visit NCHE’s data webpage and click on your state to locate State Coordinator and local liaison contact information.
The Definition of *Homeless*

- *Homeless children and youth* means individuals who **lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence**, including those who are
  - Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
  - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations
  - Living in emergency or transitional shelters
  - Staying in a public or private place not intended for human habitation

- *Homeless children and youth* includes migrant students and young people on their own (unaccompanied youth) whose living arrangements meet the definition

42 U.S.C. §11434a
McKinney-Vento Student Rights

McKinney-Vento students have the right to

- Immediate school enrollment even when records are not present
- Remain in the school of origin or enroll in the local attendance area school, according to the student’s best interest
- Receive transportation to and from the school of origin, if requested
- Receive support for academic success (free school meals; Title I, Part A supports; school uniforms and supplies; college preparation and readiness assistance; referrals to community supports; etc.)
Partner Programs

Federal statute requires collaboration between the EHCY Program and:

- Title I, Part A (Elementary and Secondary Education Act)
- Career and technical education programs (Perkins Career and Technical Education Act)
- Special education programs (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)
- Early care and education programs (Child Care and Development Block Grant Act, Head Start Act)
- Institutions of higher education (Higher Education Act)
- Housing providers (McKinney-Vento Act, Runaway and Homeless Youth Act)
Policy and Funding Levers During the Pandemic
Supporting Homeless Students During the Pandemic

• McKinney-Vento students may be served under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021

• Both acts include an education stabilization fund that directs supplemental funding to elementary and secondary schools, and institutions of higher education

• Both acts encourage schools to address the unique needs of students most at-risk of being adversely affected during the COVID-19 public health crisis, including students experiencing homelessness

• For more information, visit NCHE’s COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Information webpage or the U.S. Department of Education’s CARES Act webpage

• Late breaking: Status of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021
Thank You!

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