

McKinney Vento Handbook



K-12 School Nurses

2017-2018

WASHINGTON STATE MCKINNEY-VENTO EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAM SCHOOL STAFF RESOURCE

OVERVIEW

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, reauthorized in 2015 by Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act, provides for the delivery of services to remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of homeless children and youth in schools. Every school district or LEA is required to implement the McKinney-Vento Act, including appointing a local homeless liaison who is responsible for ensuring that homeless children and youth are identified, enrolled immediately in school, and linked to services.

School administrators, teachers, and support personnel encounter children and youth experiencing homelessness every day and play a critical role in ensuring that these children and youth are identified and served. As school personnel, you are often the ones who develop trusting relationships with students and families and can be the eyes and ears to identify vulnerable students and ensure that they are linked to services and support.

This booklet will guide school personnel in ways to support homeless families, children, and youth. Included are a summary of requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act and state legislation, the role of the local liaison, and both general strategies for school personnel and strategies for specific role groups to help homeless students enroll in school, attend regularly, and succeed academically. Also included are links to additional information and resources.

GENERAL STRATEGIES FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL

- Have contact information for the local homeless liaison on hand and contact him or her to learn about LEA procedures and policies regarding homeless students.
- When you identify a student who is or may possibly be experiencing homelessness, contact the local liaison right away to ensure that the student is linked to all needed services.
- Participate in trainings to increase your awareness of the needs of homeless students and provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act to address their needs.
- Become familiar with trauma-informed services, understanding that many homeless children and youth have experienced tremendous loss, stress, and in many cases, domestic violence.
- Be on the lookout for indicators that a child or youth may be experiencing homelessness, such as
 - chronic hunger or fatigue;
 - stress and concern about family or where they will go after school;
 - erratic attendance at school;
 - changes in behavior;
 - poor grooming or clothing that draws attention or is worn for several days in a row; or
 - reluctance to part with belongings while at school.
- Encourage the student and build hope for the future.
- Discuss a child's or youth's possible homelessness with him or her or with parents or guardians in a discrete, respectful way, avoiding using the word "homeless." You should use terms like "living in a temporary situation" or "not having a stable place to live."
- Do not disclose information about a student's living situation to anyone other than the local liaison and to other school administrators and school staff only as needed.
- Ensure that the child or youth feels welcome in the school and classroom and has genuine connections to caring adults.

RESOURCES

- NCHE Training Resources (Webinars and Self-Paced Trainings)
http://center.serve.org/nche/web/online_tr.php

STRATEGIES FOR SCHOOL NURSES AND HEALTH ROOM ASSISTANTS

- Look for indicators that a student may be experiencing homelessness, and make a referral to the local homeless liaison.
- Assist parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth with obtaining required health and medical records and completing health forms.
 - Assist them with obtaining medical information from clinics or the state Department of Health.
 - Contact the previous school to obtain immunization and health records.
 - Assist the family with arranging any needed immunizations for their child.
 - Remind registrars that homeless children and youth must be enrolled in school immediately even if immunization or health records are not available at the time of enrollment.
- Notify the principal, school counselor, school social worker, and teachers of any serious medical condition of the child or youth.
- Be familiar with the provisions of Washington State's Homeless Student Stability and Opportunity Gap Act regarding under what conditions a school nurse, school counselor, or local liaison is authorized to provide informed consent for nonemergency primary care services for an unaccompanied homeless youth.
- Request information from the local liaison regarding a referral to a physician or medical clinic for a child or youth who needs medical care.
- If a homeless student is experiencing stress, fatigue, or minor illness, allow the student to rest in the nurse's office.
- Talk to a parent or guardian about where the child or youth should go if he or she becomes ill and needs to leave school. Homeless shelters often require that families leave during the day, and homeless parents may be difficult to contact. Remember that when a homeless student is ill and must be sent home, the place he or she is going may not be stable or quiet.
- Provide hygiene items for homeless children and youth; make arrangements for them to take showers before or after school or wash their clothes in sports laundry facilities, as necessary.
- Provide a list of health care resources to homeless parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth.
- Conduct workshops at shelters or libraries for homeless parents on nutrition, hygiene, health needs, or stress reduction.