



May 2025

McKinney-Vento Children and Youth

NEWSLETTER

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Helpful Downloads from the National Center for Homeless Education

The National Center for Homeless Education provides a variety of downloadable resources to support liaisons working with homeless students.

These materials include:

- **Guides & Toolkits:** Resources like the Homeless Liaison Toolkit and A McKinney-Vento Toolbox help liaisons implement effective programs.
- **Educational Posters:** Posters in English and Spanish outline the educational rights of homeless youth and parents.
- **Federal Data & Reports:** Summaries and guides on collecting and reporting federal data related to homeless education.
- **Collaboration Resources:** Materials on partnerships between schools and social service agencies, as well as strategies for supporting displaced students.
- **Teaching Strategies:** Research-based recommendations for educators working with highly mobile and at-risk students.
- **State-Level Coordination:** Handbooks and planning guides for state coordinators overseeing McKinney-Vento programs.

You can explore these resources in detail [here](#).

Ensuring Early Childhood Support for Young Children Experiencing Homelessness

Early childhood development programs play a crucial role in mitigating the long-term effects of homelessness on young children. Programs such as Head Start, Early Head Start, childcare, Early Intervention, and Home Visiting provide essential services that support cognitive, social, and emotional development. However, many families experiencing homelessness face significant barriers in accessing these programs. In fact, fewer than 5% of children experiencing homelessness are enrolled in Head Start, Early Head Start, or similar district-funded programs.

School district homeless liaisons have a unique opportunity to bridge this gap by identifying and referring young children to early learning programs. A checklist has been developed to guide liaisons in this process, ensuring that children receive the support they need.

The checklist focuses on two key areas:

- **Identifying Younger Children Experiencing Homelessness:** Liaisons should take proactive steps to identify younger children in need by incorporating questions about siblings (ages 0-5) during school enrollment. Collaboration with other district programs, such as IDEA, and Title IX, can also help identify children who may require early childhood services. Additionally, liaisons should consider outreach efforts for youth experiencing homelessness who are expectant parents, ensuring their children have access to early learning opportunities.
- **Referring Children to Early Childhood Development Programs:** Once identified, liaisons can connect families with local early childhood partners using tools such as the Head Start Locator and Child Care Resource Finder. Establishing a clear referral system, including the use of the Referral App for Children Experiencing Homelessness, can streamline the process and ensure families receive timely support. Providing families with accessible descriptions of available programs and their benefits can also encourage enrollment and participation.

By actively identifying and referring young children to early learning programs, liaisons can help break the cycle of homelessness and provide children with a strong foundation for future success. These efforts not only support individual families but also strengthen the broader community by fostering stability and educational opportunities for vulnerable populations.



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American Red Cross Support for Displaced Residents

McKinney-Vento liaisons should be aware that the American Red Cross can provide critical support when students and families experience displacement due to residential emergencies such as fires, storms, or flooding.

If a student or family is impacted by such an event, the Red Cross may be able to offer:

- Financial assistance for immediate needs like food, clothing, and shelter
- Health services for lost prescriptions or medical equipment
- Mental health support for trauma-related needs
- Referrals to community organizations such as VOAD and United Way

When to Contact the Red Cross (1-833-583-3111):

- A family is displaced and asking, "Where will we stay?" or "What will we eat?"
- A home is rendered unlivable due to fire, flooding (beyond a typical basement), storm, or similar incident
- There is a fire-related fatality or extensive fire response
- First responders request support on scene

What to Share When Calling:

- Address of the incident
- Names and contact information of those affected
- Number of adults and children involved

Note: Families do not have to be uninsured to receive help. Red Cross can bridge the gap while families await insurance or other assistance.

Please keep this resource in mind when working with students experiencing housing instability due to emergencies.

Supporting McKinney-Vento Students During the Summer

Supporting students experiencing homelessness during the summer is crucial for their continued academic and personal development. Under the McKinney-Vento Act, these students have the right to access summer school programs, which help bridge the gap between school years and prevent learning loss.

McKinney-Vento liaisons play a vital role in ensuring that students are aware of and can access these programs by removing barriers such as transportation and enrollment issues.

Additionally, summer programs often provide meals and other essential services, offering stability and support during a time when regular school resources are unavailable.

Allowable uses of McKinney-Vento funds for summer support include tutoring, supplemental instruction, transportation costs, before- and after-school programs, and engagement and retention strategies.

By maintaining engagement and providing necessary resources, McKinney-Vento liaisons help students experiencing homelessness stay on track academically and prepare for the upcoming school year.

District Liaison Spotlight Nicola May - Cabell County Schools

Nicola May, the McKinney-Vento liaison for Cabell County, excels in her role by actively participating in local Continuum of Care (COC) meetings. Her consistent attendance at these meetings exemplifies a best practice for McKinney-Vento liaisons, as it fosters collaboration with community partners to address homelessness. Through her engagement, Nicola ensures that the needs of students experiencing homelessness are prioritized and met, demonstrating her dedication to improving educational outcomes for these vulnerable students. By attending COC meetings, Nicola is able to stay informed about available resources and services, which she then leverages to provide comprehensive support to students, ensuring they have access to transportation, food, healthcare, and other essential services. This proactive approach helps remove barriers to education, fostering a stable and supportive environment for students to thrive academically and personally.