

# **Lone Tree Community School District Homeless Plan**

**Homeless Students: Definitions, Rights and  
Identification**

**July, 2013**

**Identified Lone Tree Homeless Liaison:**

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# Lone Tree Community School

## I. Definition of Homeless:

### A. State Definition:

1. As a child between ages of three and 21 who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and includes the following:
  - A. A child who is sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason; is living in a motel, hotel trailer park, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; is living in an emergency or transitional shelter; is abandoned in a hospital; or is awaiting foster care placement.
  - B. A child who has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
  - C. A child who is living in a car, park, public space, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train station, or similar setting.
  - D. A migratory child who qualifies as homeless because the child or youth is living in circumstances described above.

### B. A child who is living with non-nuclear family members or with friends. McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001, title X Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act – 2 – 1, is as follows:

1. An individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence
2. Includes (i) children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement; (ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime resident that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; (iii) children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and (iv) migratory children who qualify as homeless because the children are living in circumstances described above.

## II. Categories of Homeless Children

- A. Migratory Children and Youth – if staying in accommodations not fit for habitation
- B. Runaways – if their parents have provided and are willing to provide a home for them
- C. Throwaways – if they live on the streets, in shelters or in other transitional or inadequate residence is obtained.
- D. Abandoned Children and Youth – are homeless until a fixed, regular and adequate residence is obtained
- E. School – ages Unwed Mothers – if living in homes for unwed mothers
- F. Children Living with Homeless Parents
- G. Children, Not With Parents, Doubled-Up with Friends or Relatives
- H. Children Living with Family that is Doubled-up with Another Family
- I. Children Placed by the State or County in an Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, or Temporarily placed in Foster Care because of Lack of Shelter Space.

## III. Rights of Homeless Students:

- A. Homeless children and youth have the right of access the same free and appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to all other children.
- B. A homeless child or youth may remain in the school he/she attended before becoming homeless, if that is determined to be in the child's best interest.
- C. Homeless children must be admitted immediately, without medical records.
- D. Lack of school records cannot prevent a homeless student from enrolling in a new school.
- E. Homeless children and youth shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students.
- F. Homeless families do not need to provide a permanent address in order to enroll students in school, nor do youth in their own need to provide this information before enrolling. Schools cannot require proof of residency that will prevent or delay school enrollment.
- G. Parental permission cannot be used to delay enrollment of homeless youth.
- H. In determining school placement, the child's best interest must be considered. Consideration must be given to parent requests for school placement.
- I. A child or youth who meets the definition of homeless in Chapter 33, Educating the Homeless, shall not be denied a free appropriate public education solely on the basis of transportation.
- J. A comprehensive checklist of Iowa requirements for the education of homeless children may be found in the publication: Homelessness: Local Program Planning Review Guide: Services for Homeless Children and YOUTH. This may be accessed through the Iowa Department of Education web site.

IV. School Services:

- A. The district shall make available to homeless youth all services and assistance on the same basis as those services and assistance that are provided to resident students.
  - 1. Compensatory education
  - 2. Special Education
  - 3. English as a Second Language
  - 4. Vocational and technical education courses or programs
  - 5. Program for gifted and talented students
  - 6. Health services
  - 7. Preschool
  - 8. Food and nutrition programs

V. Key Provision in Title I Relating to Homelessness

- A. Homeless youth attending school are automatically eligible for Title I services.
- B. The district must set aside Title I funds to serve homeless children who do not attend a participating building, including living in shelters.
- C. The local district has signed assurances regarding Federal Legislation to ensure education to homeless children will be provided.
- D. The district will include homeless students in academic assessment, reporting, and accountability systems.

VI. Identification of Homeless Students

- A. Parents may not reveal homelessness because of fear of losing their children. School personnel are not obligated by law to contact child protective services simply because a child is homeless. Fear of being stigmatized results in a reluctance by families to be identified.
- B. Signs:
  - 1. Parents exhibit anger or embarrassment when asked about current address.
  - 2. Parents may hide lack of a permanent address with comments such as “It’s a new address, I can’t remember it.
  - 3. Parents appear confused when asked what school their child last attended.
  - 4. Parent has no medical or school records in hand.
  - 5. Parent may create reasons for poor appearance and/or hygiene
  - 6. Chronic hunger and tiredness
  - 7. Erratic attendance and tardiness
  - 8. Grooming and person hygiene that draws attention
  - 9. Consistent lack of preparation for school – no books, supplies, completed homework, or papers signed
  - 10. Extremes in behavior – withdrawn, extreme shyness, nervousness, aggression, anger
  - 11. Resistant to parting with personal possessions
  - 12. Attendance at many different schools.
  - 13. Avoidance of activities due to lack of money

14. Delay in language development
15. May be absent on special occasions, embarrassed by lack of treats
16. May cling to what they have and may be aggressive in trying to claim something for themselves
17. Sleeping in class
18. Mention of staying with relatives, friends, or in a motel
19. Depression/Anxiety – short attention span, withdrawn, doesn't socialize, poor self-esteem, fear of abandonment
20. Disturbed Relationships
21. Hunger
22. Poor health/nutrition
23. Poor Hygiene
24. Transportation/Attendance problems
25. Lack of Continuity in Education
26. Concerned about privacy/personal space

C. Identification Strategies

1. Staff awareness
2. Student Management Software – attendance, addresses
3. Mailing Labels
4. Familiarity with Motel Addresses
5. Incomplete or Unusual Enrollment Records
6. Statements made by Children and their Parents
7. Referrals from outside sources

D. Include and promote Self-Referral, Peer Referral, Community Service Agency Referral Outreach to Community Agencies to Identify Homeless Children

1. The district homeless liaison will communicate with appropriate local, state, and federal agencies to seek services and support for homeless children

VII. Educational Support Strategies Provided by the District

- A. Enroll the child immediately
- B. If school records are missing, solicit help in assessing academic skills
- C. Sensitivity and awareness training for school personnel
- D. Inform staff of student status
- E. Arrange for homeless liaison to meet with the child and/or family
- F. Counselors and teachers who are knowledgeable about homelessness
- G. Teachers identified to serve as advocate
- H. Assign student mentors
- I. Identify family and support services and resources available
- J. Educational programs that offer stability and control
- K. Transportation to and from school
- L. Remedial instruction and tutoring

- M. Provide support services that include school supplies, food, counseling, shelter, and recreation if needed
- N. School supplies and clothing
- O. Seek involvement with student assistance team if necessary
- P. Maintain a cumulative count of homeless students
- Q. Maintain a record of pertinent information regarding homeless students

VIII. Provide and Posting of Homeless Information

- A. Post information regarding availability of school program, services, funding, and homeless rights in
  - 1. District School Buildings
  - 2. Day Centers
  - 3. Area Churches
  - 4. Post Office
  - 5. Signs posted in convenience, grocery store, city hall, restaurants, and other local establishments

IX. District Wide Goals

- A. Post notification of the district's liaison contact
- B. Review Board Policies to identify any possible barriers for enrolment for homeless children
- C. Maintain a count of homeless students
- D. Review identification procedures with certified and non-certified staff and in local publications
- E. Ensure homeless students are enrolled
- F. Ensure homeless students have access to services
- G. Ensure local postings and assurances for homeless children are in place
- H. Ensure that student records of homeless students are received or transferred
- I. Review policies and best practices of homeless education in staff development
- J. Ensure homeless students are transported to the district
- K. Ensure homeless Education Web Sites available to students and staff
- L. Collaboration with outside agencies and organizations in order to improve comprehensive services to families, children and youth who are homeless
- M. Planning and implementation of appropriate professional development for staff
- N. Ensure appropriate resources are available for homeless children and youth – meals, school supplies, clothing
- O. Respond to community inquiries regarding homelessness
- P. Be available to shelter and agency personnel and to parents to assist with the enrollment and provision of support services for homeless children
- Q. Ensure that barriers are removed regarding the enrolment, school attendance, and transportation of homeless children and youth
- R. Ensure that systems are in place for the identification of homeless children and youth
- S. Evaluate district procedures to determine effectiveness of services to homeless children, youth, and their families

- T. Ensure that district policies are in place and implemented at the district and building level
  - U. Evaluate the district's Homeless Plan, practices, policies, and procedures
- X. Homeless Information Sites
- A. Iowa Department of Education:  
<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/is/homeless/documents.html>
  - B. The National Center for Homeless Education, 110 West Market Street, Suite 300,  
Greensboro, North Carolina 27403  
Help Line 1 800 308 2145
  - C. The National Coalition for the Homeless

# Lone Tree Community School Homeless Plan

## Identification and Needs Assessment Form: Preschool and School Age Children and Youth Living in Homeless Situations

**Note: Complete a separate form for each child/youth identified as living in a homeless situation.**

### Section One

**New Student:** Complete at the time of enrollment.

**Student is Currently Enrolled:** Complete when identified.

**Child/Youth Not in School:** Complete after follow-up verifies homelessness. Identifying homeless children/youth not enrolled is required by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Title X, Part C.

If information for an item is not available, complete at a later date if/when the information becomes available. Leave the item unanswered when the information is not available.

**School District:** \_\_\_\_\_ **District Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Building Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Building Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. First four letters of child/youth's last name: \_\_\_\_\_ (This facilitates reporting and enables screening out duplications when obtaining "counts", while protecting privacy rights.)
2. Date of birth (Use numbers): Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_
3. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Male: \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_
5. School program (Check the answer that applies):
  - a. Enrolled in school (K-12) \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Enrolled in preschool \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Enrolled in head start \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Enrolled in even start \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Other preschool \_\_\_\_\_ Specify: \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Not enrolled in school \_\_\_\_\_
6. If the child/youth is new to your school, record the date of enrollment in your school (Use numbers): Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_



7. Complete this item if the child/youth is new to your school and lives in a different attendance area within your district or in a different school.

Specify the attendance area or the school district: \_\_\_\_\_

- a. attends a special education class in our school \_\_\_\_\_
- b. attends a program offered in our school \_\_\_\_\_ Specify the program:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c. participates in a support service offered in our school \_\_\_\_\_ Specify the service:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- d. attends an alternative program offered in our school \_\_\_\_\_ Specify the program:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- e. attends this school at the request of the parent/guardian \_\_\_\_\_
- f. attends this school because it was determined to be in the best interest of this child/youth \_\_\_\_\_

8. If the child/youth has been attending your school, record the date the student was identified as being homeless (Use numbers): Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

9. Is this child/youth continuing attendance in your school after moving to another attendance area within your district? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

10. Is this child/youth continuing attendance in your school after moving to another school district? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

11. If the response to one of the items 7, 9, or 10 is yes, check the most frequently used mode of transportation:

- a. additional or extended bus routes \_\_\_\_\_
- b. public transportation \_\_\_\_\_
- c. taxis \_\_\_\_\_
- d. contracted transportation services \_\_\_\_\_
- e. special education buses \_\_\_\_\_
- f. non-school agency transportation \_\_\_\_\_
- g. personal vehicles \_\_\_\_\_
- h. reimbursing families for mileage \_\_\_\_\_
- i. none \_\_\_\_\_
- j. Other \_\_\_\_\_ Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

12. If the response to one of the items 7, 9, or 10 is yes and if an extra cost for transportation is incurred, estimate the school transportation cost per day:

\_\_\_\_\_

13. If you responded to items 12, estimate the total cost of school transportation for this child/youth (cost per day times number of days transported):

\_\_\_\_\_

14. If the child/youth is not enrolled in school, record the date the child/youth was identified as being homeless (Use numbers): Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

15. If available, record the date the homeless situation ended: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

16. If the child/youth left your school while still homeless, record the discharge date: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

17. Race (Check only one, if multiracial check the race the child/youth is most likely to be identified with):

- a. White \_\_\_\_\_
- b. African-American \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Hispanic \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Native American \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Asian \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Other \_\_\_\_\_ Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

18. Child/youth status with respect to living/not living with parent/guardian (consider a guardian, stepmother, stepfather as a parent) (Check only one):

- a. Unaccompanied (not with parent) \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Accompanied by mother only \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Accompanied by father only \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Accompanied by both parents \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Accompanied by mother and friend \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Accompanied by father and friend \_\_\_\_\_
- g. Other \_\_\_\_\_ Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

19. Current living situation of parent/guardian if the child/youth is living with parent/guardian (Check only one):

- a. Emergency shelter \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Transitional housing \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Domestic violence center \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Car, camper, abandoned building \_\_\_\_\_
- e. On the street \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Relatives \_\_\_\_\_
- g. Friend or acquaintance \_\_\_\_\_
- h. Unknown \_\_\_\_\_
- i. Other \_\_\_\_\_ Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

20. Current living situation of child/youth, if child/youth is **not** living with parent/guardian (Check only one):

- a. Emergency shelter \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, facility name \_\_\_\_\_

- b. Transitional housing \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, facility name \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Domestic violence center \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Car, camper, abandoned building \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. On the street \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Hotel/motel \_\_\_\_\_
  - g. Living with relation other than parent/guardian \_\_\_\_\_
  - h. Living with friend or acquaintance \_\_\_\_\_
  - i. Unknown \_\_\_\_\_
  - j. Other \_\_\_\_\_ Specify \_\_\_\_\_
  - k. Shelter Care-court placed \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, facility name: \_\_\_\_\_
  - l. Temporary placement in foster care due to lack of shelter care space \_\_\_\_\_
  - m. Homes for unwed mothers or pregnant youth \_\_\_\_\_
  - n. Hospital or other facility if abandoned by parent(s) \_\_\_\_\_
  - o. Other \_\_\_\_\_ Specify: \_\_\_\_\_
21. Is the child/youth also identified as a migrant? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
22. If the child/youth is living with parent/guardian how many children, including this child/youth, are in this homeless family: \_\_\_\_\_ **(Complete a separate copy of this Form for each child/youth attending your school and for each child/youth not attending school.)**
23. Complete the following for children/youth (between 0-21) in this family who **attend a school outside your attendance area** (This will assist in identifying a child/youth who has not been identified as homeless by the school the child/youth is attending):
- a. Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_ School name \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_ School name \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_ School name \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_ School name \_\_\_\_\_
24. Were barriers encountered that delayed **enrollment**? If so, check all that apply:
- a. No barriers were encountered \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Residency requirements \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Availability of school records \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Birth certificates \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Legal guardianship requirements \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Transportation \_\_\_\_\_
  - g. School selection \_\_\_\_\_
  - h. Preschool selection \_\_\_\_\_
  - i. Immunization requirements \_\_\_\_\_
  - j. Physical examination records \_\_\_\_\_
  - k. Lack of parental cooperation \_\_\_\_\_
  - l. Language \_\_\_\_\_
  - m. Other \_\_\_\_\_ Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section Two**

**As data becomes available complete the following items and the Section One items above that were not completed earlier.**

25. Were barrier(s) to **attendance** encountered? If so, check all that apply:
- a. No barriers were encountered \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Transportation \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Health \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Lack of parent cooperation \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Other \_\_\_\_\_ Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

26. Cause of homelessness as it **applies to the parent/guardian** when child/youth is **living with parent/guardian**:

**Primary Reason (check only one):**

- a. Addiction \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Divorce/family breakup \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Domestic violence \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Evicted within the past week \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Family/personal illness \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Jail/prison of a parent \_\_\_\_\_
- g. Moved to seek work \_\_\_\_\_
- h. Physical/mental disability \_\_\_\_\_
- i. Unable to pay rent/mortgage \_\_\_\_\_
- j. Unemployment \_\_\_\_\_
- k. Loss of FIP (Family Investment Plan) /TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) \_\_\_\_\_
- l. Unknown \_\_\_\_\_
- m. Other \_\_\_\_\_ Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**Secondary Reason (Check all that apply):**

- n. Addiction \_\_\_\_\_
- o. Divorce/family breakup \_\_\_\_\_
- p. Domestic violence \_\_\_\_\_
- q. Evicted within the past week \_\_\_\_\_
- r. Family/personal illness \_\_\_\_\_
- s. Jail/prison of a parent \_\_\_\_\_
- t. Moved to seek work \_\_\_\_\_
- u. Physical/mental disability \_\_\_\_\_
- v. Unable to pay rent/mortgage \_\_\_\_\_
- w. Unemployment \_\_\_\_\_
- x. Loss of FIP (Family Investment Plan) /TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) \_\_\_\_\_
- y. Unknown \_\_\_\_\_

z. Other \_\_\_\_\_ Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

27. Cause of homelessness as it **applies to the child/youth** when child/youth is **not** living with parent/guardian (check only one reason):

- a. Runaway (For whatever reasons) \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Throwaway (Cast out by parents/guardian) \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Abandoned by parent/guardian \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Mother or mother to be (Not living with her parent/guardian or child's father for whatever reason) \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Parent/guardian unable to care for the child/youth \_\_\_\_\_ Specify the reason:  
\_\_\_\_\_

f. Other \_\_\_\_\_ Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

28. School attendance (Check all that apply):

Significant indicates a negative effect on school progress.

- a. Satisfactory attendance \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Significant number of days missed due to illness \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Significant number of days missed due to illness \_\_\_\_\_

Specify the reason: \_\_\_\_\_

- d. Significant number of late arrivals \_\_\_\_\_ Specify the reason:  
\_\_\_\_\_

29. Has the child/youth had difficulty gaining to one or more of the following programs (Check all that apply):

- a. Title I \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Head Start \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Even Start \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Special Education \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Bilingual Education \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Safe and Drug Free Schools \_\_\_\_\_
- g. Other \_\_\_\_\_ Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

30. Based on your assessments and observations of this child/youth identify his/her educational needs. On the following list check all of the programs/services that would help to meet an educational need of this child/youth even if the program/service is not available. (It is important to respond to both questions 21 and 22. This permits identification of both "met" and "unmet" needs for a specific child or youth):

- a. Title I \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Head Start \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Even Start \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Preschool Program \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Tutoring/Remedial \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Summer School Academic Programs \_\_\_\_\_

- g. Special Education \_\_\_\_\_
  - h. Gifted/Talented \_\_\_\_\_
  - i. Vocational Education \_\_\_\_\_
  - j. Work-Study \_\_\_\_\_
  - k. Alternative Education \_\_\_\_\_
  - l. Bilingual/Education as a Second Language (ESL) \_\_\_\_\_
  - m. School Transportation \_\_\_\_\_
  - n. Extra-Curricular Activities \_\_\_\_\_
  - o. Counseling \_\_\_\_\_
  - p. Evaluations by School Staff to Determine Educational/Personal Needs \_\_\_\_\_
  - q. Free-Reduced Breakfast and/or Lunch \_\_\_\_\_
  - r. Parental Training Program \_\_\_\_\_
  - s. Parental Assistance Regarding Child's Educational/Personal Needs \_\_\_\_\_
  - t. Parental Assistance Regarding Accessing Community Services \_\_\_\_\_
  - u. Assistance in Obtaining Records, Immunizations, Supplies, etc. \_\_\_\_\_
  - v. Other (Describe): \_\_\_\_\_
- 

31. On the following list check all of the programs/services that the school (or the community) provided to this child/youth:

- a. Title I \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Head Start \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Even Start \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Preschool Program \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Tutoring/Remedial \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Summer School Academic Programs \_\_\_\_\_
- g. Special Education \_\_\_\_\_
- h. Gifted/Talented \_\_\_\_\_
- i. Vocational Education \_\_\_\_\_
- j. Work-Study \_\_\_\_\_
- k. Alternative Education \_\_\_\_\_
- l. Bilingual/Education as a Second Language (ESL) \_\_\_\_\_
- m. School Transportation \_\_\_\_\_
- n. Extra-Curricular Activities \_\_\_\_\_
- o. Counseling \_\_\_\_\_
- p. Evaluations by School Staff to Determine Educational/Personal Needs \_\_\_\_\_
- q. Free-Reduced Breakfast and/or Lunch \_\_\_\_\_
- r. Parental Training Program \_\_\_\_\_
- s. Parental Assistance Regarding Child's Educational/Personal Needs \_\_\_\_\_
- t. Parental Assistance Regarding Accessing Community Services \_\_\_\_\_
- u. Assistance in Obtaining Records, Immunizations, Supplies, etc. \_\_\_\_\_
- v. Other (Describe): \_\_\_\_\_

32. On the following list of personal needs check all that would assist this child/youth even if the service is not available. (It is important to respond to both questions 23 and 24. This permits identification of both “met” and “unmet” needs for a specific child or youth):

- a. Health needs (eye glasses, immunizations, illness, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Clothes \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Personal items \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Food \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Emergency shelter for one or a few nights \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Safe and adequate housing for an extended period of time (shelter care, transitional housing, other community supported housing) \_\_\_\_\_
- g. Mental health services \_\_\_\_\_

*Check items h through l if they apply to either the child/youth or the child/youth's parent/guardian:*

- h. Community transportation: Child/Youth \_\_\_\_\_ Parent \_\_\_\_\_
- i. Childcare services: Child/Youth \_\_\_\_\_ Parent \_\_\_\_\_
- j. Agency coordination: Child/Youth \_\_\_\_\_ Parent \_\_\_\_\_
- k. Case management: Child/Youth \_\_\_\_\_ Parent \_\_\_\_\_
- l. Interpreter: Child/Youth \_\_\_\_\_ Parent \_\_\_\_\_
- m. Other \_\_\_\_\_ Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

33. On the following list of personal needs check the services that **were provided** to this child/youth by community organizations and agencies (or the school), check all that apply:

- a. Health needs (eye glasses, immunizations, illness, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Clothes \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Personal items \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Food \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Emergency shelter for one or a few nights \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Safe and adequate housing for an extended period of time (shelter care, transitional housing, other community supported housing) \_\_\_\_\_
- g. Mental health services \_\_\_\_\_

*Check items h through l if they apply to either the child/youth or the child/youth's parent/guardian:*

- h. Community transportation: Child/Youth \_\_\_\_\_ Parent \_\_\_\_\_
- i. Childcare services: Child/Youth \_\_\_\_\_ Parent \_\_\_\_\_
- j. Agency coordination: Child/Youth \_\_\_\_\_ Parent \_\_\_\_\_
- k. Case management: Child/Youth \_\_\_\_\_ Parent \_\_\_\_\_
- l. Interpreter: Child/Youth \_\_\_\_\_ Parent \_\_\_\_\_
- m. Other \_\_\_\_\_ Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

# Information for Parents

## If your family lives in any of the following situations:

- In a shelter, motel, vehicle, or campground
- On the street
- In an abandoned building, trailer, or other inadequate accommodations, or
- Doubled up with friends or relatives because you cannot find or afford housing

## Then, your preschool-aged and school-aged children have certain rights or protections under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act.

### Your children have the right to:

- Go to school, no matter where you live or how long you have lived there. They must be given access to the same public education, including preschool education, provided to other children.
- Continue in the school they attended before you became homeless or the school they last attended, if that is your choice and is feasible. If a school sends your child to a school other than the one you request, the school must provide you with a written explanation and offer you the right to appeal the decision.
- Receive transportation to the school they attended before your family became homeless or the school they last attended, if you or a guardian request such transportation.
- Attend a school and participate in school programs with children who are not homeless. Children cannot be separated from the regular school program because they are homeless.
- Enroll in school without giving a permanent address. Schools cannot require proof of residency that might prevent or delay school enrollment.
- Enroll and attend classes while the school arranges for the transfer of school and immunization records or any other documents required for enrollment.
- Enroll and attend classes in the school of your choice even while the school and you seek to resolve a dispute over enrolling your children.
- Receive the same special programs and services, if needed, as provided to all other children served in these programs.
- Receive transportation to school and to school programs.

## When you move, you should do the following:

- Contact the school district's local liaison for homeless education (see phone number below) for help in enrolling your child in a new school or arranging for your child to continue in his or her former school. (Or, someone at a shelter, social services office, or the school can direct you to the person you need to contact.)
- Contact the school and provide any information you think will assist the teachers in helping your child adjust to new circumstances.
- Ask the local liaison for homeless education, the shelter provider, or a social worker for assistance with clothing and supplies, if needed.

Local Contact: Mrs. Shelby Bryce  
Phone: 319 629-4610  
E-mail: sbryce@lone-tree.k12.ia.us

State Coordinator: Sandra Johnson  
Department of Education, Des Moines, Iowa 50319  
Phone: 515-281-3965  
E-mail: [sandra.johnson@iowa.gov](mailto:sandra.johnson@iowa.gov)

If you need further assistance, call the  
National Center for Homeless Education  
at the toll-free HelpLine number:

**1-800-308-2145**





# Information for School-Aged Youth



## If your family lives in any of the following situations:

- In a shelter, motel, vehicle, or campground
- On the street
- In an abandoned building, trailer, or other inadequate accommodations, or
- Doubled up with friends or relatives because you cannot find or afford housing

## Then, you have certain rights or protections under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act.

### You have the right to:

- Go to school, no matter where you live or how long you have lived there. You must be given access to the same public education provided to other students.
- Continue in the school you attended before you became homeless or the school you last attended, if that is your choice and is feasible. The school district's local liaison for homeless education must assist you, if needed, and offer you the right to appeal a decision regarding your choice of school if it goes against your wishes.
- Receive transportation to the school you attended before you became homeless or the school you last attended, if you request such transportation.
- Attend a school and participate in school programs with students who are not homeless. Students cannot be separated from the regular school program because they are homeless.
- Enroll in school without giving a permanent address. Schools cannot require proof of residency that might prevent or delay school enrollment.
- Enroll and attend classes while the school arranges for the transfer of school and immunization records or any other documents required for enrollment.
- Enroll and attend classes in the school of your choice even while the school and you seek to resolve a dispute over enrollment.
- Receive the same special programs and services, if needed, as provided to all other students served in these programs.
- Receive transportation to school and to school programs.

## When you move, you should do the following:

- Contact the school district's local liaison for homeless education (see phone number below) for help in enrolling in a new school or arranging to continue in your former school. (Or, someone at a shelter, social services office, or the school can direct you to the person you need to contact.)
- Tell your teachers anything that you think they need to know to help you in school.
- Ask the local liaison for homeless education, the shelter provider, or a social worker for assistance with clothing and supplies, if needed.

### Local Area Contacts:

Shelby Bryce-Lone Tree School  
319 629-4610

### State Coordinator:

Sandra Johnson  
515 281 3965  
sandra.johnson@iowa.gov

If you need further assistance, call the National Center for Homeless Education at the toll-free HelpLine number:

**1-800-308-2145**



## Homeless Education Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act?

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is Title X, Part C, of the No Child Left Behind Act. This legislation ensures that children and youth experiencing homelessness have full and equal access to an appropriate public education and that they experience success in school. Key components include:

#### Enrollment

- Schools must immediately enroll children and youth in homeless situations, even when records normally required for enrollment are not available.
- Students may stay in their school of origin, if feasible (in their best interest).
- Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youth must be posted in every public school and in appropriate places throughout the community.
- Unaccompanied youth must be provided educational access through the support of the local homeless education liaison. (See definition under "Who is considered homeless.")

#### Attendance and Success

Students with appropriate support are more likely to attend school on a regular basis. Attendance is critical if school success is to be realized. School districts must provide appropriate case management to ensure students have access to all educational services to which they are eligible.

- Students experiencing homelessness must receive services comparable to those of

housed students.

- Transportation to the school of origin must be provided, when appropriate.
- Social service agencies and school districts must work together to serve students.
- Families and unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness must be fully informed of available enrollment options and educational opportunities.
- Schools must provide written explanations of placement decisions and the enrollment dispute process.
- Separate schools or programs for children and youth experiencing homelessness are prohibited, with the exception of several programs specifically named in the McKinney-Vento Act.

### Who is Considered Homeless?

The McKinney-Vento Act (Section 725) defines a "homeless children and youth" (school age and younger) as:

- Children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth 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, cars, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, camping grounds or similar settings due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
  - Living emergency or transitional shelters.



## Homeless Education Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)

- Abandoned in hospitals.
- Awaiting foster care placement.
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

### **How can schools verify that students are homeless?**

There is no universal system of verification. Shelter providers may verify homeless status. Children and youth must be enrolled immediately when the school is informed that the family or youth is experiencing homelessness. If questions regarding homeless status based upon the definition of the McKinney-Vento Act exist, schools should contact their local homeless education liaison.

### **Are all families that share housing considered homeless?**

No. Families that share housing, living in doubled-up settings, must still meet the McKinney-Vento definition's requirement that the living situation is due to a loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason. Families that live together due to cultural preference, to save money, or to pool resources to provide a larger/nicer home than would be possible if living individually should not be considered homeless. Questions that may assist in making the determination of homelessness in a doubled-up situation can be found in the NCHE brief, *Determining Eligibility for Rights and Services Under the McKinney-Vento Act*, at <http://www.serve.org/nche/briefs.php>.

### **Are children and youth who qualify for migrant services considered homeless?**

The children of migrant workers should only be considered homeless if they meet the definition of homelessness cited earlier. A migratory lifestyle alone is not sufficient to be considered homeless.

### **Are children or youth incarcerated or in correction facilities considered homeless?**

No. The U.S. Department of Education 1995 Guidance specifically excludes any child or youth who is imprisoned or otherwise detained by Act of Congress or state law from the definition of homelessness. Even children or youth who were homeless prior to incarceration, are not considered homeless while incarcerated.

### **Are children and youth in foster care considered homeless?**

By definition, children and youth in foster care placements are wards of the state, so they are not considered homeless. Temporary or short term foster care placements may be considered homeless. "LEA liaisons should confer and coordinate with local public social service agency providers in determining how best to assist homeless children and youth who are awaiting foster care placement." (*U.S. Department of Education Draft Non-regulatory Guidance*, July 2004).

### **What additional guidance is available regarding the definition of homelessness and the education of homeless students?**

For more information about determining homelessness according to the McKinney-Vento definition, download the NCHE brief *Determining Eligibility for Rights and Services*



## Homeless Education Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)

Under the McKinney-Vento Act at <http://www.serve.org/nche/briefs.php>.

### **How Quickly Must Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness be Enrolled in School?**

Schools must enroll a child or youth experiencing homelessness immediately, even if the child or youth is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment. Immediately means without delay.

### **Must a school enroll children or youth without proof of immunizations or physicals?**

Yes. The school must enroll students who do not have health records if they meet the definition of homeless. The school should refer the family or youth to the local homeless education liaison to obtain the necessary documentation. The sending school may provide a copy of the health record to the parent when the student leaves and fax a copy to the new school to facilitate this process.

### **Must schools enroll students in homeless situations who do not have previous school records?**

Yes. Students experiencing homelessness must be enrolled in school while waiting for the previous school records to be received. Parents can request copies of critical documents such as Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs), gifted testing records, and report cards from the sending school. Parent Pack Pocket Folders, developed by NCHC, may assist in maintaining important school documents. Visit <http://www.serve.org/nche/products.php> to learn more.

### **If a student in a homeless situation moves without returning books or paying fees, can a school district withhold student records?**

No. A school district cannot withhold records when books or charges have not been paid.

### **Can a school require proof of residency (rent receipt, lease agreement, utility receipt) that prevents or delays enrollment?**

No. Homeless students, by definition, lack a fixed residence and cannot be required to provide traditional proof of residency if doing so is not possible or would delay enrollment. An affidavit explaining the lack of residency proof can be completed as an alternative.

### **When children or youth experiencing homelessness are not living with parents or legal guardians, is the school required to enroll the child?**

Yes. Guardianship cannot be a barrier to enrollment. Some students, due to family situations, may not be able to live with their family; others are not permitted by their parents or guardians to live at home. The local liaison should be contacted to assist unaccompanied youth who wish to enroll in school.

### **If families in homeless situations move within a school district, can students stay at the same school, even if they move out of the school's attendance zone?**

Yes, the McKinney-Vento Act states, that when feasible, students have a right to stay in the school of origin. The school of origin is the school that the child attended when



## **Homeless Education Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)**

permanently housed or the last school in which the student was enrolled.

### **Can school districts educate children and youth experiencing homelessness in separate schools (e.g., classes located on shelter sites)?**

Homelessness is not a reason to separate students from their housed peers. Students in homeless situations must not be isolated from the mainstream school environment except in a few limited circumstances defined in the McKinney-Vento legislation.

### **What services must school districts provide to children and youth in homeless situations?**

The McKinney-Vento Act requires school districts to provide services to students experiencing homelessness that are comparable to services provided to other students in the school district. Homeless children and youth must have access to any educational services for which they qualify, including special education, gifted education, free and reduced-lunch programs, before- and after-school activities, and Title I, Part A, services. The students are not to be segregated or stigmatized.

### **Can Title I, Part A, funds be used to address the educational needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness?**

Yes. According to the No Child Left Behind Act, children and youth experiencing homelessness automatically qualify for Title I, Part A, support, whether students attend schoolwide, targeted assistance, or non-Title I schools. Title I must coordinate services in order to promote the

academic achievement of homeless students.

### **May children and youth experiencing homelessness attending non-Title I schools be served under Title I, Part A?**

Yes. Title I, Part A, funds must be reserved to provide comparable services to eligible homeless children who might attend schools not receiving Title I, Part A, funding. This may include providing educationally related support services to children in shelters.

### **Are children experiencing homelessness eligible to enroll in preschool?**

Yes. Young children who are homeless should have the same access to public preschool programs as young children who are housed. Head Start and Even Start may reserve slots for students experiencing homelessness to avoid waiting list delays that occur when children arrive after the school year has begun.

### **How should special education programs serve students experiencing homelessness?**

The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) was amended in 2004 to facilitate the timely assessment, appropriate service provision and placement, and continuity of services for children and youth with disabilities who experience homelessness and high mobility. Schools and school districts are required to complete initial evaluations within specific timeframes, ensure that assessments of children who transfer to a new school district are coordinated with prior schools, and provide children who have current IEPs and transfer to a new school district during the school year with services immediately. For unaccompanied



## **Homeless Education Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)**

youth, IDEA specifically requires LEAs to appoint surrogate parents.

### **What academic concerns commonly impact students in homeless situations?**

Due to changing schools and the stress of being homeless, students may fall behind academically, causing learning lags and gaps that can be more than four months. Students may not have quiet places to study or access to school supplies, books, or computers. Students need to know of study halls or after-school tutoring availability. If a child was receiving special education services or was participating in gifted and talented programs, the continuity of instruction needs to be maintained.

### **What are some common health-related issues affecting students experiencing homelessness?**

Students who are homeless are often at an increased risk of becoming ill due to their living conditions. If the students become sick, they often have no quiet place to rest. These students are more likely than their peers to get the flu, have stomach ailments, have respiratory problems, and visit the emergency room. School nurses can help by offering referrals for screenings, maintaining a clothes closet, assisting parents in filling out forms, and ensuring that students are aware of the school's procedure for participating in the free and reduced lunch program.

### **What are some of the other issues that commonly affect students experiencing homelessness?**

Students in homeless situations often are concerned about their safety because they may

not have a secure place to go after school. In these instances, students should be told about community programs, such as Boys and Girls Clubs. In addition, homeless students must also deal with the stigma associated with being homeless. They may have difficulty establishing friendships. Guidance counselors or school social workers may assist students in dealing with emotions associated with being homeless. Schools can create welcome packs for all new students containing basic information about the school and assign peer buddies to tour the school.



## Homeless Education Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)



### For More Information and Assistance

National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)  
P.O. Box 5367  
Greensboro, NC 27453  
336-315-7543  
800-308-2145 (toll-free helpline)  
336-315-7457 Fax  
<http://www.serve.org/nche>

### Other Helpful Contacts

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHYC)  
<http://www.naehcy.org>

National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty (NLCHP)  
<http://www.nlchp.org>

U.S. Department of Education, Education for Homeless Children and Youths (EHCY)  
Program  
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/homeless/index.html>

### Local Homeless Education Liaison

Name: Shelby Bryce  
Phone: 319 629 4610  
E-mail: sbryce@lone-tree.k12.ia.us

