

Appendix H: School-Level Point of Contact Form



School-Level Point of Contact Form:

Include the information necessary to have the school point-of-contact information form returned to you via the school district's interoffice mail system. A mailing label can be used. Principals need only fill in the form, fold the paper in half, staple or tape it, and return.

School-Level Point of Contact Information Sheet:

This is a single-sided information sheet. A copy should be given to principals, and the principals should give it to the individual designated as the point of contact for homeless education.



School-Level Point of Contact Form

The school-level point of contact for homeless education ideally should be someone involved with student enrollment or working with students on a regular basis (e.g., a guidance counselor). For your convenience, this sheet is labeled to return to me. Please fill in the information below and return the form via intra-school district mail by _____ (fill in a date).

School Name: _____

School Point of Contact for Homeless Education: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

Thank you for your time. I will be providing your school contact with more information.



FOLD HERE

PLACE MAILING LABEL HERE

School-Level Point of Contact for Homeless Education Information Sheet

What is a Point of Contact for Homeless Education?

A person in the school who can be contacted by the school district's liaison to share information about educating children and youth experiencing homelessness.

What are the responsibilities of a Point of Contact?

- Share information sent by the liaison with appropriate school faculty and staff members.
- Share with the liaison any difficulties that the school is experiencing in working with students who are homeless or other information, as needed.

What is the time commitment?

The time commitment may be less than one hour a month if the school has no issues related to homeless education. If there are issues with enrolling or educating students who are experiencing homelessness, more time may be needed.

How am I going to learn more about this new responsibility?

A follow-up letter giving more details and information will be sent to all school-level Points of Contact once principals have designated contacts.

What basic facts do I need to know about children and youth experiencing homelessness and education?

All children have a right to a free, appropriate public education. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-110) effective July 1, 2002, requires that homeless children:

- Be immediately enrolled in school, and enrollment requirements, such as immunizations or school records, cannot act as barriers to exclude children from school.
- Have a choice in where to enroll: their school of origin or the local school for their current residence .
- Have access to services comparable to those that housed students receive, including access to Title I resources.

Who can I contact with questions about this responsibility?

Contact the school district homeless education liaison:

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____



Appendix I:

Tip Sheets for:

School Administrators

Guidance Counselors

School Nurses

Teachers

School Secretaries

Parents



Administrator

You Can Support the Access and Success of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness in School

- Be familiar with common characteristics of children who are homeless. Common signals are attendance at several schools, poor hygiene, gaps in learning, transportation problems, poor health and nutrition, and a lack of preparedness for class.
- Welcome the student and the family, and let them know that the school is a safe and secure place.
- Make sure the child enrolls in the free and reduced-price meal programs.
- Ensure that the student has every opportunity that a non-homeless student has for after-school activities and in-school programs.
- Let parents know of their child's educational rights.
- Know your attendance zone, visit shelters to make contact with the shelter director, and reinforce that students will find the school safe and supportive.
- Hold school meetings, such as the PTA meeting, in neighborhood centers to increase accessibility to school events.
- Provide city bus tokens to get parents to school for conferences, school events, or PTA meetings.
- Encourage parents to volunteer. Discuss their interests and offer suggestions that allow them to use their expertise. Many parents will help if invited to do so.
- Support the school staff as they work with the student.
- Contact the school district homeless liaison for additional support.
- Show that you care about the student!

This tip sheet was adapted from Illinois, North Carolina, Texas, and Virginia Departments of Education and the National Center for Homeless Education documents.



Guidance Counselor

You Can Support the Access and Success of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness in School

- Be familiar with common characteristics of children who are homeless. Common signals are attendance at several schools, poor hygiene, gaps in learning, transportation problems, poor health and nutrition, and a lack of preparedness for class.
- Introduce yourself as someone who works as an advocate for the child's success in school.
- Arrange a follow-up meeting with parents a couple of weeks after enrollment.
- Ask if the child participated in any after-school activities or had special classes at a previous school, then work to connect the child with similar resources if they are available.
- Make sure the child enrolls in the free and reduced-price meal programs.
- Ensure that the student has every opportunity that a non-homeless student has for after-school activities and in-school programs.
- Let parents know of their child's educational rights.
- Know your attendance zone, visit shelters to make contact with the shelter director, and reinforce that students will find the school safe and supportive.
- Offer support for the physiological needs of the student (food, clothing) as well as the social/emotional needs (safety, security, and belonging).
- Train peer buddies to orient students to the school.
- Show that you care about the student!

This tip sheet was adapted from Illinois, North Carolina, Texas, and Virginia Departments of Education and the National Center for Homeless Education documents.



School Nurse

You Can Support the Access and Success of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness in School

- Be familiar with common characteristics of children who are homeless so you can recognize them. Common signals are attendance at several schools, poor hygiene, transportation problems, and poor health and nutrition.
- Verify immunization records and, if needed, refer the student to the local health department.
- Observe and alert the principal to any serious medical concern.
- Ask about glasses; the child may need them but not have any.
- Make sure the child enrolls in the free and reduced-price meal programs.
- Assist parents with the completion of medical records.
- Remember that sending a sick child “home” may not be a safe or stable place for a child who is experiencing homelessness. Help families determine options for their children, if ill.
- Contact the school district homeless liaison so that additional services can be coordinated.
- Follow-up with children sent to obtain immunizations or physicals.
- Contact the parent or shelter if a child is absent for three or more days.
- Develop reliable, accessible resources for medical, dental, and eye care.
- Sponsor a PTA health night.
- Show that you care about the student!

This tip sheet was adapted from Illinois, North Carolina, Texas, and Virginia Departments of Education and the National Center for Homeless Education documents.



Teacher

Support Classroom Access and Success of Students Experiencing Homelessness

- Be familiar with common characteristics of children who are homeless, such as attendance at several schools, poor hygiene, gaps in learning, attendance and transportation problems, poor health and nutrition, and a lack of preparedness for class.
- Assist other students in being sensitive to stereotypes of homeless people.
- Adjust assignments so children not living in permanent settings can complete them. (Such children may not have a place to perform a science experiment or the resources to cut out an article for current events.)
- Make sure the child enrolls in the free and reduced-price meal programs.
- Ensure that the student has every opportunity that a non-homeless student has for after-school activities and in-school programs.
- Communicate with the parents about school performance.
- Connect the child with tutoring and remediation services, if needed.
- If you have a snack break, keep a store of snacks for students who don't bring one.
- Do not take away possessions. Students may need their "stuff" nearby for security.
- Hold the child accountable for what she or he can control (e.g., behavior or attitude) not what is not in the child's control (e.g., inability to watch a news program or purchase a poster board for a project).
- Before you receive a new student
 - ⊙ Prepare a list of your class routines and procedures.
 - ⊙ Prepare a new student file with information for parents and guardians.
 - ⊙ Maintain a supply of materials for students to use at school.
 - ⊙ Prepare a "getting-to-know-you" activity available for the class to do when a new student arrives.
 - ⊙ Have the class schedule visible.



Teacher (continued)

Support Classroom Access and Success of Students Experiencing Homelessness

- When a student enters the class
 - ⊙ Introduce the student to the class.
 - ⊙ Assign a class buddy to assist with routines.
 - ⊙ Review the academic record and closely monitor the educational progress of the student.
- When a student leaves
 - ⊙ Support the class and the student by discussing the move and having classmates write letters to the departing student.
 - ⊙ Give the student a copy of the school's address so that letters can be written back either via e-mail or snail mail.
- Show that you care about the student!

This tip sheet was adapted from Illinois, North Carolina, Texas, and Virginia Departments of Education and the National Center for Homeless Education documents.



10 Things Secretaries/Enrollment Personnel Can Do for Students Experiencing Homelessness

1. Learn to identify the following tell-tale signs of homelessness:
 - Chronic hunger or tiredness
 - Erratic attendance at schools
 - Attendance at multiple schools
 - Poor grooming or clothing that draws attention
 - Lack of records, such as birth certificate, immunization record, pre-school physical, and school records, or incomplete records
 - Parent who seems confused when asked about the last school attended
 - Low-income motel address on enrollment form
 - Statements from family when enrolling, such as:
“We’ve been having a hard time lately.” “It’s a new address. I can’t remember it.”
“We move a lot and are staying with friends until we find a place.”
2. Assure families that children can enroll if you think that they are experiencing homelessness. (This is mandated by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act, P.L. 107-110.)
 - Enroll the child immediately (even without records). Ask for the name and city of the last school attended; then call that school and ask to have the records sent.
 - Arrange for the child to take a placement test if records are not available.
3. Take the family to a private place to fill out enrollment forms.
4. Offer to assist with filling out the enrollment forms. Hesitation may indicate an inability to read.
5. Assist with filling out free and reduced-price meal program forms. Arrange for lunch that day.
6. Have copies of the school/class supply lists.
7. Provide a welcome pack with paper, pencil, pen, and crayons (younger grades).
8. Privately and confidentially alert the child’s teacher and guidance counselor of the student’s living situation.
9. Before a student leaves, prepare a parent pack, a 9” x 12” (laminated, if possible) mailing envelope with photocopies of the student’s records (scholastic, social security, immunization, etc.). Share a copy with the family, and be prepared to share records with the new school quickly to expedite appropriate placement.
10. Be sensitive, patient, calm, and reassuring. YOU can make a difference!

For more information, contact your school district’s homeless education liaison.

Adapted from Maryland Department of Education flyer



Tips for Parents

- Know your educational rights.
 - ⊙ Enroll your child in school. You can enroll your child even if you are missing immunization records, school records, and proof of residency.
 - ⊙ Let the school know where you want the child to attend school. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act gives your child the right to stay at the current school even if the family's homeless situation means you are no longer in the attendance zone. The school would be called the school of origin, and school districts must let students stay, to the extent feasible. Your child also may attend the school where you are currently living.
- Keep copies of critical records such as immunizations, Social Security number, health physicals, and individualized education programs (IEPs). Ask someone you trust to keep a set of records for you if your current living arrangements make this difficult.
- Maintain high expectations for your child.
- Ask questions, such as the following:
 - ⊙ Is transportation available for my child to stay in the same school?
 - ⊙ Will someone help us transfer records quickly when we move?
 - ⊙ Is there a pre-school program?
 - ⊙ Is there a summer school program?
 - ⊙ Are there any special classes that would benefit a talent my child has?
 - ⊙ Should my child be tested for special education?
 - ⊙ Are there sports, music, or other activities in which my child can participate?
 - ⊙ Can my child receive free meals at school?
 - ⊙ Are school supplies available?
 - ⊙ Will my child be able to go on field trips even if we are unable to pay?
 - ⊙ Are there after-school study halls or tutoring available?

Local Homeless Education Liaison



Appendix J: Collaboration Action Plan



Collaboration Action Plan

Level	Strategies	People Needed	Timeline
1 Awareness			
2 Assessment			
3 Coordination of Resources			
4 Collaboration Outreach Case Management			

Adapted from Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Project UP-START, Homeless Children and Youth Program, Miami, Florida.



Appendix K: Telephone Contacts Form



Helpful Telephone Contacts for Students Experiencing Homelessness

Updated on _____

Resource	Phone Number	Contact Person	Services Offered
Boys and Girls Club			
Food Pantry			
Health Department			
Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Office			
Medical Contacts (dentists, optometrists, doctors, mental health professionals)			
Salvation Army			
Shelter:			
Shelter:			
Shelter:			



Appendix L: Sample Announcement



Sample Announcement

Homeless Education

A homeless individual is someone who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. This includes anyone who, due to a lack of housing, lives:

- In emergency or transitional shelters
- In motels, hotels, trailer parks, campgrounds, abandoned in hospitals, awaiting foster care
- In cars, parks, public places, bus or train stations, abandoned buildings
- Doubled up with relatives or friends
- Migratory children living in these conditions

Homeless students face multiple challenges and barriers to success in school. The Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program provides resources and technical assistance to ensure homeless students are enrolled in school and have the supports and resources necessary for success. If you would like to be on our mailing list, have questions related to the education of homeless children and youth, or would like additional information, brochures, posters, or resource lists, please contact:

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Toll-Free: _____

Fax: _____

TDD: _____

E-mail: _____

Website: _____



Appendix M: Web-Page Development Form



Basic Web Page

Ask the webmaster for the school district if he or she prefers receiving the material electronically or as a hard copy. This web page contains “bare bones” basics that may be included to promote awareness. This can be as short as a single page or longer depending on local needs and resources.

Suggested items to include

School District name: _____

Local Liaison for Homeless Education: _____

Local Liaison’s telephone number: _____ ext. _____

Local Liaison’s e-mail address: _____

Name of the State Coordinator for Homeless Education: _____

State Coordinator’s telephone number: _____ ext. _____

Provide a link to or list the state homeless education website: _____

Banner message for the top of the page: *Homeless Children & Youth Have the Right to a Free, Appropriate Public Education*

Copies of school district procedures regarding the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness

Tips for administrators working with parents and children experiencing homelessness (see Appendix I)

Tips for teachers working with students experiencing homelessness (see Appendix I)

Links to helpful web pages (see Appendix O)

Common Questions and Answers

Q: Who is homeless?

A: Anyone who, due to a lack of housing, lives:

- In a shelter
- In a motel
- In a vehicle
- In a campground
- On the street
- Doubled up with relatives or friends

(see Appendix B)



Q: Where can homeless children and youth attend school?

- A:
- The school in which the child or youth was last enrolled (school of origin)
 - The school in the attendance area where the child or youth is temporarily living

Q: What is needed to enroll a student in (name of the school district)?

(fill in appropriate information above)

Q: Can students experiencing homelessness be denied enrollment if the parent/guardian does not have proof of residency?

A: No. The parent/guardian may sign an affidavit stating that the family is staying in temporary accommodations.

Q: What if the parent/guardian does not have the school records for a child experiencing homelessness?

- A:
- Ask that the homeless child or youth be enrolled in school until the records arrive.
 - Ask that a student's immunization records be transferred over the phone from the sending school to the receiving school.
 - Contact your school district, principal, counselor, or local homeless education liaison with any concerns.

