



SchoolHouse Connection

Overcoming Homelessness Through Education

**Welcome to SchoolHouse Connection's Webinar
Increasing Access to PreK and other Early Childhood Programs for Young Children
Experiencing Homelessness
June 27, 2017**

Links for information included in the webinar

Hot link for graphics is: <https://aspe.hhs.gov/execsum/research-early-childhood-homelessness>

The sources of research are available on our website,
<http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/early-childhood/>

The public preschool data was just released yesterday by the US Dept. of Education and may change somewhat when data quality activities are complete.

There is extensive information available on the ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences) study, including at <https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/practicing-effective-prevention/prevention-behavioral-health/adverse-childhood-experiences> and <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/index.html>

Here's a recent survey of preK services state-by-state: <https://www.ecs.org/ec-content/uploads/State-Pre-K-Funding-2016-17-Fiscal-Year-Trends-and-opportunities-1.pdf>

The latest ICPH report is on-line here: <http://www.icphusa.org/national/shadows-state-state-ranking-accountability-homeless-students/>

Want to find your McKinney-Vento State Coordinator?
https://nche.ed.gov/states/state_resources.php

Want to find a local Head Start program? <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/>

<http://hearus.us> for more short videos.

Questions and Answers

Q: I have a preschool MV child transitioning to Kindergarten. Does the school of origin pertain to this student? Would she be qualified to go to the elementary program in the school district where she went to preschool?

A: The answer to this question depends on whether your preschool programs are considered feeder schools into a particular kindergarten class/building. Our preschool flow chart can help answer that question (see page 3):

<http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/PreschoolMarch2017.pdf>.

Q: Do you have resources for rural preschool homelessness?

A: We have a video designed to increase awareness and provide strategies for working with young children experiencing homelessness. The video includes information from Head Start programs in rural areas of Tennessee and Connecticut. You can access the video at <https://vimeo.com/188911524>, using the password "SHCwebinar." It also is available to purchase on a DVD with 3 other videos. See <https://vimeo.com/pjulianelle> for more information.

Also the "ChildreninTransitionFormSY 16-17" in the handouts pane can be used in rural or urban areas.

Q: For clarification, homeless families are not required to provide proof of residence, income or immunization/school records prior to enrollment...correct? Also, under ESSA do homeless families have 90 days to provide required immunization/school records?

A: You are correct. McKinney-Vento provides for immediate enrollment without those documents for children in public school and preschool programs. ESSA does not contain any time limit on providing immunizations, so enrollment would need to continue even beyond 90 days. Head Start's Program Performance Standards also have provisions for immediate enrollment. You can read the details on those policies here:

<http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/early-childhood/> and here:
<http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/k-12/>

You also can access a FAQ document on the education rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness at: https://www.nlchp.org/documents/McKinney-Vento_FAQs

Q: What can be done to ensure access to preschool and early childhood education programs beyond putting children at the top of the wait list?

A: Early childhood programs, including preschool and Head Start, can do needs assessments analyzing data on child homelessness, and when homeless children enter the district or service area. Using that data, the programs can hold slots open for homeless children. Programs that hold slots open find that they are quickly filled by homeless children who come into the district or service area. New Head Start Program Performance Standards, for example, specifically allow for this practice. Just putting homeless children at the top of the wait list often is meaningless if the wait list doesn't move before the child moves to another area. The child can end up hopping from waitlist to waitlist and never getting services.

1. Hold spots open. 2. Eliminate boundaries that restrict participation geographically, at least for children experiencing homelessness. 3. Have a central person or database that shows any openings anywhere in the area, even without regard to typical boundaries.

Look at data to plan ahead for the needs of young children experiencing homelessness. How many children can you expect? How can you adapt the typical process to allow those children to enter ECE and preschool when they come into your area?

Q: What are other liaisons doing to ensure the Pre K staff are educated in their districts- Are additional liaisons hired to specifically work with the Pre K populations? Are the district liaisons taking on the responsibilities?

A: Just a few minutes at pre-existing staff meetings can make a big difference in increasing awareness of child homelessness and understanding of their challenges and needs. Training and outreach is constant and on-going. Getting a few minutes at existing trainings and also meeting specifically with preK teachers. Doing training at least once each year is critical. We have a video designed to increase awareness and provide strategies for working with young children experiencing homelessness. You can access the video at <https://vimeo.com/188911524>, using the password "SHCwebinar." It also is available to purchase on a DVD with 3 other videos. See <https://vimeo.com/pjulianelle> for more information.

“Get out and talk to anyone and everyone who will listen!” Head Start family service workers are a key audience. Also many of the early childhood councils, like those associated with Smart Start, Head Start, and early intervention. Regional early childhood planning days can tackle all the ECE programs in a whole region once annually, to maximize efficiency.

State associations on early childhood, young children, Head Start, etc. are another efficient way to train a lot of people all at once. Child Care Resource & Referral programs also can help your training reach child care eligibility workers and providers.