

GUIDE TO USING SESAME STREET IN COMMUNITIES’ RESOURCES ON FAMILY HOMELESSNESS: SUGGESTIONS FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

*For the entire guide, visit:

<http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/guide-to-using-sesame-street-in-communities-resources-on-family-homelessness>

More than one million American children under the age of six experience the trauma of homelessness, and public schools have identified 1.3 million children experiencing homelessness in grades K-12. As a compassionate member of the Sesame Street community, you may wonder what you can do to help these children and their families.

The reality is that families in every community—rural, suburban, and urban—experience homelessness, and homelessness can look different for each family. Sesame Street’s “Lily” stayed in “all different kinds of places” with her family before they found a place of their own. Children and families experiencing homelessness sometimes stay with other people (including people they may not know very well), in hotels or motels, or in shelters. It is common for them to be highly mobile and not to know how long they will be able to stay in any one place.

Here, we provide tips for how you can help children and families experiencing homelessness in your community.

1. Contact your school district’s [homeless liaison](#) to ask if they have students who need supplies or gift cards, or whether there are other opportunities to support local families experiencing homelessness. If you can’t find the contact information for your school district liaison on your school district’s website, visit [this directory of state coordinators for the education of homeless children and youth](#) to find your State Coordinator, who can share local contact information.
2. Use [this link](#) to find your local Head Start provider(s) and ask them how you can help young children and families experiencing homelessness in your community.
3. Reach out to other organizations in your community who may be providing services to families experiencing homelessness, including your [local United Way](#), [Family Promise Affiliate](#), [Family and Youth Services program](#), [Salvation Army](#), or [HUD homeless assistance programs](#).
4. Reach out to your local community college or university to ask if they offer supports for students experiencing homelessness. Studies show that many college students are parents, and that parents are disproportionately likely to experience homelessness. Find out how can you support these young parents and their children so they can stay in school and receive quality early childhood services.
5. Stay informed about local, state, and federal policy related to student homelessness by following SchoolHouse Connection on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).