## Risk and Resilience: Differences in Risk Factors and Health Outcomes Between Homeless and Non-Homeless Students

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Based on 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) data

### 1,300,000+* children and youth identified as experiencing homelessness by public schools

*as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, these children lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

### What Causes Student Homelessness?

- Persistent poverty
- Lack of affordable housing
- Domestic violence
- Other health and socioeconomic reasons, including low education levels
- For unaccompanied youth, abuse, neglect, and family conflict

### Effects of Experiencing Homelessness:

- 87% more likely to drop out than housed students
- Without HS diploma or GED, youth are 4.5 times as likely to experience homelessness as young adults
- Disproportionate health and mental health risks

### Students Experiencing Homelessness Were*:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.23X</td>
<td>more likely to miss school due to safety concerns.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.63X</td>
<td>more likely to misuse prescription pain medicine.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.03X</td>
<td>more likely to be victims of sexual dating violence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.21X</td>
<td>more likely to make a suicide plan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.88X</td>
<td>more likely to be victims of physical dating violence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.19X</td>
<td>more likely to attempt suicide.</td>
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*compared to students not characterized as experiencing homelessness

### Call to Action:

Include homelessness question(s) in state and local YRBS questionnaires!

States and localities can obtain insights into the scope and effects of youth homelessness and establish a baseline for schools to use in improving their efforts to identify and serve students experiencing homelessness.

### Recommendations

1. Improve implementation of the protections and supports provided to homeless children and youth by federal law:
   - #1 Identification
   - #2 Engagement and participation in school
   - #3 Access to mental health services

2. Address and mitigate highly prevalent risk behaviors:
   - #1 Establish a culture of care
   - #2 Empower self-advocacy
   - #3 Create physical safe spaces

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I never worried about my safety because I became worthless to my own eyes.'

"Often, I used [prescription drugs] to combat the results of stress. Helping students find other ways of relieving stress and the effects of stress would help reduce misuse."

"I felt that it was pointless to talk about the sexual violence I was experiencing because I didn’t think I would be able to find the help I needed. I didn’t have transportation to see a therapist, and there weren’t any in my area that took my insurance. I needed to have a physical exam done following the sexual violence, but didn’t think there were any resources in my area that could help me."