

Checklist for Local Education Agencies and Early Childhood Providers

For children and youth experiencing homelessness, early childhood settings and school may be the only source of food, education, health and mental health services, caring adults, and a safe place to be during the day. **When schools and early learning programs close, the health, safety, and well-being of homeless children and youth are jeopardized.** Moreover, children and youth experiencing homelessness are extremely mobile, and stay in situations that make it impossible for them to self-isolate, or to recover should they fall ill. They often lack access to wifi or technology necessary for online learning, or a stable place in which to learn.

All COVID-19 responses must proactively incorporate outreach to homeless families and unaccompanied youth, including those who are staying in “hidden” homeless situations. **These families and youth are unlikely to benefit from initiatives that are predicated on a stable and safe home environment, consistent internet access, or reliable transportation.**



1. Identification, Outreach and Communications

- Reach out often** to families and youth currently identified as homeless to:
 - Identify and monitor** their current living situations, health, safety, basic and education needs.
 - Share resources and information.
 - Assist them in accessing services.
- Make additional efforts to **proactively identify families and youth** who may be experiencing homelessness, including through sensitive conversations about housing status.
- Ensure any community communications and updates include information** for families and youth who may be experiencing homelessness and are in multiple languages, if possible.



2. Ensuring Health, Safety and Basic Needs

- Identify and communicate:**
 - safe and stable housing options** for quarantine and/or recovery; explore use of safe motels.
 - where and how youth and families can access** food, health care and mental health services, and other services, including sites (schools, libraries, etc.) that can remain open.
 - Deliver or provide transportation** to food (including formula and other food appropriate for young children), hygiene supplies (soap, sanitizer, clean clothing, sanitary supplies, and diapers) and medicines, or other supports.
- Ensure that families and youth who are staying outside of the school district** in which they are currently enrolled receive information about and connections to local resources.
- Provide pre-paid cell phones** with calling minutes and unlimited data for communication (and to access online assignments).

- Conduct visits (in person or by phone)** to support physical and mental wellness.
- Establish central locations** that also have items necessary for proper hygiene and laundry facilities.
- Disseminate** [CDC](#), state and local information on COVID-19 prevention, symptoms, care, and testing.
- Disseminate** information to youth and families **on how to recognize, avoid, and report trafficking and other predatory behavior**, including the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888 and the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233.



3. Access to Learning

- Review and implement** the requirements of the [McKinney-Vento Act](#).
- Provide and communicate:**
 - Additional flexibility** for deadlines and participation requirements,
 - Accommodations for **highly mobile students**, and
 - Accommodations for students who cannot participate** in online learning opportunities due to homeless living situations, including those with disabilities or who are English Language Learners.
- Identify and remove barriers** that may prevent **unaccompanied youth** from participating fully in classes and school activities during remote learning (such as technology considerations and parental/guardianship requirements).
- Provide mobile hotspots and laptops/tablets** to shelters, motels, and directly to families and youth who are staying with other people.
- Conduct educational check-ins** in person or virtually.
- Start planning for when schools reopen**, to support students in the reentry process to allow for a smooth transition back.



Resources

- [CDC: Resources for K-12 Schools and Child Care Programs](#)
- [CDC: Interim Guidance for Homeless Shelters](#)
- [CDC: Resources for Community- and Faith-Based Leaders](#)
- [ED: COVID-19 \("Coronavirus"\) Information and Resources for Schools and School Personnel](#)
- Office of Head Start: The guidance from [ACF-HS-IM-19-01 General Disaster Recovery Flexibilities](#) can be applied to Head Start programs impacted by COVID-19
- [Mental Health and Coping During COVID-19](#)
- [Talking to Children About COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\): A Parent Resource](#)
- [Tornadoes, hurricanes and children](#)
- [Psychological First Aid for Schools](#)
- [When Terrible Things Happen: For Students](#)