Virtual Conversation #5 with SHC on COVID-19: Questions, Strategies, Information

Thursday, April 23
4 - 5 PM Eastern

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About SchoolHouse Connection

SchoolHouse Connection works to overcome homelessness through education. We provide strategic advocacy and practical assistance in partnership with schools, early childhood programs, institutions of higher education, service providers, families, and youth.

- Website: [http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org](http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org)
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- Newsletter: [https://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/sign-up/](https://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/sign-up/)
- Federal and state policy advocacy
- Q&A from our inbox
- Webinars and implementation tools
- Youth leadership and scholarships
Housekeeping

HAVE A QUESTION?

This webinar is for you. Enter your questions in the questions pane and click ‘Send’.

RECORDING & HANDOUTS

An archive of this webinar and all materials will be posted here.

This PowerPoint is available in your “Handouts” panel.

If you’ve signed up for this webinar, you will receive a link to the recording in an email after the webinar is over.
Quick Poll
Today’s Agenda: Listen, Learn, Share

- Where to Find SHC Resources
- What’s New? Updates
- Facilitated conversation:
  - Outreach and communications
  - Health, Safety, Basic Needs
  - Access to Learning
  - Unaccompanied Homeless Youth
  - Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers
- Congressional update
- Resources links
As COVID-19 disrupts education, services and life across the country, children and youth experiencing homelessness are exceptionally vulnerable. This page offers resources to help meet their needs as we respond to this global crisis.

- FAQ on COVID-19 and Homelessness
- COVID-19 Checklist for State Education Leaders on Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness
- Opportunities for Impact Survey: Child and Youth Homelessness, Schools, and COVID-19
- Five Strategies to Help Homeless Youth Transition to College During COVID-19
- Five Ways to Protect Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers Experiencing Homelessness During COVID-19
- Checklist for Local Education Agencies and Early Childhood Providers
- Fact Sheet on Stimulus Payments and Homeless Youth
- Strategies for Schools and Early Learning Programs
- Higher Education Resource: COVID-19 Response for Youth Who Are Homeless or in Foster Care
- Upcoming and Archived Webinars
- Policy Updates
- [Guest Perspective] Supporting Our Students Amidst the Unknown: Evolving Lessons During COVID-19
- News on COVID-19 and Homelessness
- Other Resources
What’s New?
This Week’s Updates
ED announced $13.2 billion in Elementary and Secondary School Relief Funds (ESSER) today, April 23.

The amount each state education agency will receive is here.

State education agencies (SEAs) must allocate 90% of the funds to local education agencies (LEAs), including public charter schools, in proportion to the amount of FY 2019 funds the LEA received under Title I, Part A.

Up to 10% of the SEA's award may be retained for the state agency to use to address needs related to responding to coronavirus.
The “application” is a streamlined certification and agreement. ED plans to release funds within three days of receiving the completed agreement.

Allowable uses of funds specifically include activities authorized under the education subtitle of the McKinney-Vento Act, and activities to address the unique needs of students experiencing homelessness, including how outreach and service delivery will meet their needs.

States have great discretion in shaping the LEA subgrant applications.

SHC urges state education agencies to:
- Require LEAs to set aside CARES Act funding for homeless students, just as LEAs are required to do under Title I Part A
- Use funds reserved by the state to provide assistance to homeless students
COVID-19 Checklist for State Education Leaders on Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness
Governors Education Relief Fund

- ED published its [application](#) for $3 billion in Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Funds on April 14. The amount each state will receive is available [here](#).
- Funds are for Governors to provide local educational agencies (LEAs), institutions of higher education (IHEs), and other education-related entities with emergency assistance to respond to the coronavirus.
- Funds specifically can be used to provide support for activities authorized under the McKinney-Vento Act’s Education for Homeless Children and Youth program.
- Applications must describe the strategies used to serve disadvantaged populations, specifically children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- Advocacy needed: see [SHC resources](#).
ED issued guidance on April 22 regarding the $6 billion to institutions of higher education for emergency financial aid grants, to be provided directly to students. The guidance states that only students who filled out a FAFSA, or are eligible to fill out a FAFSA, are eligible for emergency financial aid grants - i.e. excludes undocumented students.

A list of distribution of CARES Act higher education funding is here.

Emergency financial aid is for expenses related to disruptions to education due to COVID-19, including for course materials and technology, food, housing, health care, and childcare.

Some institutions are providing a set amount to all students who filled out a FAFSA; others are using applications; still others are using a combination approach.

Outreach to students is important.
CDC updated its interim guidance on April 22.

- Description of “whole community” approach
- Description of considerations for facility layout
- Description of considerations for facility processes
- Revisions with the understanding that many people might be asymptptomatically infected with COVID-19
- Clarification of cloth face covering use by clients and staff
- Clarification of personal protective equipment use by staff
The Family and Youth Services Bureau issued a Frequently Asked Questions document for Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHYA) grantees about use of funds, length of stays, shelter capacity, and other questions related to the operation of RHYA programs.

The National Network for Youth holds virtual office hours weekly on various topics related to youth services.
Coronavirus/Economic Stimulus - H.R. 266
Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act

- Passed Senate on April 21; House votes today (April 23)
- $448 Billion
- Replenishes Paycheck Protection Program (loans to businesses that can be forgiven to keep employees on payroll)
- Expands coronavirus testing
- Aid for hospitals
- More coronavirus legislation expected
New & Featured Resources:

**Five Strategies to Help Homeless Youth Transition to College During COVID-19**

**Checklist for State Education Leaders**

**Fact Sheet on Stimulus Payments and Homeless Youth**
https://bit.ly/3eNt8Gz

**Webinar on “Access to Stimulus Payments for Young People” - 4/29, 3PM Eastern**
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1506679881681286923
Opportunities for Impact Survey
Child and Youth Homelessness, Schools, and COVID-19
Read the Summary
Fill out a survey after the webinar.
“Outreach to the hundreds and hundreds of Frederick County (MD) Public Schools students identified as "McKinney-Vento eligible" is ramping up with the creation of school-based outreach teams. They will identify priority needs of the student and/or family that include food, medicine, face masks, hygiene items, new clothing, mobile phones, and internet-accessible devices. Having identified those needs, outreach personnel will input the needs list into a web form that will be hosted on the shipfrederick.com platform.”

-Ed Hinde, SHIP Frederick Frederick, MD
Facilitated conversation on known challenges/responses
REMINDER:
Federal Education Laws Remain in Effect With Limited Waivers

Children and youth experiencing homelessness retain all educational rights under current federal law.

- Secretary is permitted to waive various sections of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act related to assessments, accountability, state plans, and allocation of funding.
- Secretary does not have the authority to waive:
  - McKinney-Vento Act requirements
  - Title I Part A reservation of funds for homeless students
  - Requirements to serve children/youth with disabilities who are homeless
  - Independent student status for unaccompanied youth on the FAFSA
Outreach, Identification, Communication

CHALLENGES

● McKinney-Vento students staying outside of school district.
● Maintaining contact with M-V students, including Unaccompanied Youth.
● Identifying families and youth who become homeless after schools closed.

STRATEGIES

● Coordinating with area liaisons to get resources to MV students living in their attendance areas (resource lists)
● Pre-paid cell phones
● Coordinated outreach to families, students, campgrounds, motels

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Health, Safety, Basic Needs

CHALLENGES

- Access to temporary housing for self-isolation/recovery/safety
- Food: access, delivery
- Access to hygiene and health services
- Providing food and materials safely

STRATEGIES

- Motel vouchers, RVs, dorms
- Gift cards
- Repurposing bus drivers for delivery of items
- Community foundations, faith-based supports, businesses
- Leaving items outside doors, in bins

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Challenges & Responses
E-Learning

CHALLENGES
● Mobile hotspots
● Devices (laptops, tablets, phones)
● Minutes for phone use
● Places to charge devices
● Stable environment conducive to learning

STRATEGIES
● Spectrum internet
● Comcast offer
● Xfinity offer
● Cox offer
● Wifi in school parking lots and on school buses
● Donations to cover insurance on devices

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Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

CHALLENGES
● Isolation
● FAFSA determinations
● Consent to health care for minors

STRATEGIES
● Regular check-ins
● Prepare FAFSA determinations in advance for all identified UHY, and also as new UHY are identified
● State Laws on Minor Consent for Routine Medical Care
● State Laws to Support Youth Experiencing Homelessness

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“At the county level, we will continue to work with students one-on-one to complete, submit, and monitor their FAFSAs. In California, our programs have access to Webgrants, so we are able to monitor and identify any errors or incomplete FAFSAs. Our team continues to assist each student with their needs, including ongoing monitoring of email communications that students received from financial aid or the colleges.”

-Pamela Hancock
Director of Fresno County Foster and Homeless Youth Education Services, California
"Recovery Rebate" of $1,200 provided through the CARES Act is only available to individuals who cannot be claimed as a deduction on someone else’s tax return (tax years 2018 and 2019)

- SHC is working on advocacy so all unaccompanied homeless youth, and all students considered independent on the FAFSA, can receive the benefit regardless of whether their parents claimed them on their taxes.
- **Strategy**: Work with unaccompanied youth to file 2019 taxes as soon as possible.
  - Free tax return software is available.
  - Unaccompanied homeless youth with no income can complete an online registration offered by TurboTax, in partnership with the IRS.
Young Children (Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers)

**CHALLENGES**

- Appropriate food items
- Safety of physical environment (shelters, other temporary locations)
- Preschool enrollment for next school year (deadlines, etc.)

**STRATEGIES**

- Ask about the presence of young children
- Connect to WIC and CACFP and Head Start about appropriate food
- Child-proofing checklist - electric sockets, removal of sharp objects and toxics, and provision for adequate security

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Challenges & Responses
Federal Waivers
Federal Waivers and Other Action as of April 23, 2020

**ED**

- By April 10, all payments on federally held student loans will be suspended, without interest or penalties, through Sept. 30.
- ED provided *waivers* to allow funds from previous fiscal years to be spent over the next school year.

**USDA**

- [Waived requirement to provide school meals in group setting](#)
- [Waived meal time requirements](#)
- [Allowing delivery of school meals](#)
- [Allowing parents/guardians to pick up meals without children present](#)
- Districts can provide food to students in their area who are not enrolled in the district.

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Federal Waivers and Other Action as of April 1, 2020

**HUD/FHA**

- Foreclosure and eviction moratorium for single family homeowners with FHA-insured mortgages for the next 60 days (effective March 18, 2020)
- Waivers for Homeless Assistance Programs (Continuum of Care and Emergency Shelter Grants) (April 1, 2020)

**ACF**

- ACF Information Memorandum - March 30, 2020
  - Provides short-term relief for administrative, financial management, and audit requirements
  - Applicable to human service activities conducted by recipients in areas affected by COVID-19
  - 12 specified areas of flexibility
  - ACF Information Memorandum: IM-ACF-OA-2020-01
CARES Act provided $4 billion in Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG)
Can be used for motel/hotels, emergency shelter, services.
Includes “at risk of homelessness” for prevention activities. Per HUD, this term includes those defined as homeless by ED and HHS
$1 billion went out last week under existing formula to current grantees.
See HUD press release here, and CARES Act funding state and grantee allocations here
Remaining amount to be allocated to states or local units of government by formula determined by Secretary.
Federal Legislative Update
COVID-19 Bills Overview

Phase 1

Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, enacted March 6, 2020

$8.3 billion emergency funding bill designed to treat and prevent the spread of COVID-19

Phase 2

Families First Coronavirus Response Act, enacted March 18, 2020

Provides for free testing, paid sick leave, some food assistance and waiver authority, and unemployment provisions

Phase 3

The CARES Act, enacted Friday, March 27, 2020

$2.2 trillion for coronavirus response and economic stimulus

Phase 4

In progress

Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act - H.R. 266

Phase 3.5
Third Coronavirus/Economic Stimulus - H.R. 748

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund

- Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund
- Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund
- Governors Emergency Education Relief Fund
- Additional Child Care, Head Start, Runaway and Homeless Youth Act funding
- Housing assistance funding: Emergency Solutions Grant, Community Development Block Grant, Rental Assistance, More

See SHC’s Summary of Homelessness-Related Provisions
SHC’s “Phase Four” Advocacy Priorities: Education

- **K-12 Education:** $500 million to support identification, outreach, and removal of barriers to services and education through the Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program.

- **Higher Education:** New funding and requirements to target outreach to youth experiencing homelessness, prioritize them for emergency aid, provide them with assistance in FAFSA completion, and waive SNAP work requirements for college students.

- **Early Childhood:** Emergency child care, outreach, and early learning support for young children experiencing homelessness.
SHC’s “Phase Four” Advocacy Priorities: Youth and Families

- **Unaccompanied Youth**: Provisions to remove barriers to Recovery Rebates for unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness.

- **Family Stabilization**: A dedicated flexible funding stream to support emergency needs, including emergency housing, eviction prevention, outreach, and other services, for families and children experiencing homelessness.

Read more details on SHC’s “Phase Four” Advocacy Priorities
Questions

+ Don’t Forget: Fill out the survey after this webinar
Education Week Map: Coronavirus and School Closures

SchoolHouse Connection and Other Education Resources

- [SchoolHouse Connection] COVID-19 and Homelessness: Strategies for Schools, Early Learning Programs, and Higher Education Institutions
- Supporting Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness during the COVID-19 Outbreak: Questions to Consider | United States Interagency Council on Homelessness
- COVID-19 ("Coronavirus") Information and Resources for Schools and School Personnel
- COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Information
- AASA Provides Resources on Coronavirus
- Chronic Absenteeism in the Time of Coronavirus
- ACF-HS-IM-19-01 General Disaster Recovery Flexibilities
Mental Health Resources

- Mental Health and Coping During COVID-19 | CDC
- Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health During an Infectious Disease Outbreak
- Coping With Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks
- Talking to Children About COVID-19 (Coronavirus): A Parent Resource
Thank you!

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