Why are school districts obligated to serve homeless youth?

Under the Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, reauthorized the Title I Part A, of the Every Student Succeeds Act all LEA (Local Education Agencies) must provide specific services to homeless children and youth. The full text of the law can be found at http://www.serve.org/nche/m-v.php. In addition, a comprehensive series of issue briefs on various topics in the law can be found at https://www.ed.gov/essa?src=rn.

What is the role of the Local Homeless Liaison?

The homeless education liaison is responsible for ensuring the identification, school enrollment, attendance, and opportunities for academic success of students in homeless situations. The liaison is available to address any questions from schools or parents regarding educational services for homeless students.

Who is defined as homeless?

According to the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Act of 2001, homeless children and youth means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, adequate night-time residence and includes the following:

- Living in an emergency/transitional shelter (e.g. FEMA Trailers) or abandoned in a hospital
- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship or other similar reason; doubled-up
- Living in a car, parks, temporary trailer parks or campgrounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings or similar settings
- Living in a hotel, motel, or trailer park on a temporary basis due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations

Who can help with identified needs once a homeless student enrolls in my school?

- Your school social worker has been designated the school-based homeless liaison; they are responsible for your school’s identification, school enrollment, attendance, and opportunities for academic success of students in homeless situations.
- There are additional resources right at your school, including the school counselor, school psychologist or school nurse.
- The Homeless Education and Literacy Program (H.E.L.P.) is available to offer support services to schools and families.
  - The H.E.L.P. office is dedicated to assisting homeless/ in-transition children and youth by eliminating barriers to school enrollment, attendance, continuity, and overall academic success.
  - The H.E.L.P. office supports the whole family by linking them to community resources in order to reach the goal of self-sufficiency.
  - The H.E.L.P. office also focuses on the need for strong literacy skills by providing children and youth with educationally based tutorial services, supplemental literacy material, and referrals.

*Please refer to Homeless Enrollment Procedure, Transportation Procedure and Student Nutrition Procedure on the next three pages for additional guidelines and information.*