EDUCATION SYSTEMS AS CRITICAL PARTNERS IN ENDING HOMELESSNESS: THE FEDERAL CONTEXT

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ABOUT NCHE

- NCHE operates the U.S. Department of Education’s technical assistance center for the federal Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program
  - Website: http://nche.ed.gov
  - Helpline: 800-308-2145 or homeless@serve.org
OUTLINE

- Federal statutory requirements for collaboration
- Educational supports for homeless children and youth
  - Education subtitle of the McKinney-Vento Act
  - Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act and Head Start Act
- Strategies and action steps
- Q&A

HEARTH ACT EDUCATION ASSURANCES

- CoC applicants must

1. Establish policies and practices that support children’s educational rights under federal law [HEARTH Act Sec. 426(b)(4)(C)]

2. Designate a staff person to ensure that children receiving CoC services are connected to education [HEARTH Act Sec. 426(b)(4)(D)]

3. Place families with children as close as possible to their school of origin to the maximum extent practicable [HEARTH Act Sec. 426(b)(7)]

4. Work with schools to help identify homeless children and youth and inform them of their educational rights [HEARTH Act Sec. 427(b)(1)(B)(iii)]
HSG/ED PARTNERSHIPS IN HUD RESOURCES

- Look for references to school partners (early education through higher education) in HUD resources, including
  - Coordinated entry resources:
    https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/toolkit/responsibilities-and-duties/
    #coordinated-entry
  - Homeless youth service provider materials:
    https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/resources-for-homeless-
    youth/resources-for-homeless-youth-service-providers/#planning-your-
    coordinated-community-approach

COLLABORATION UNDER THE M-V ACT

- The State Coordinator for Homeless Education must coordinate with a variety of agencies and service providers to improve the provision of comprehensive education and related services to homeless children and youth, including:
  - Housing providers
  - Child welfare and social services agencies
  - Law enforcement, and juvenile and family courts
  - Mental health providers
RIGHTS AND SUPPORTS FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS

- **Education subtitle of the McKinney-Vento Act**
  - Removal of barriers to school enrollment and retention
  - Immediate enrollment, even if lacking paperwork
  - School selection (school of origin or local school) and transportation, as needed
  - Supports for school success
  - Assistance with transitioning to higher education
  - Visit [https://nche.ed.gov/legis/mv.php](https://nche.ed.gov/legis/mv.php) for more information

- **Child Nutrition Act**
  - Free school meals through direct certification by a local liaison or shelter provider
  - Visit [https://nche.ed.gov/legis/cn_wic.php](https://nche.ed.gov/legis/cn_wic.php) for more information

- **Higher Education Act**
  - Independent student status for purposes of federal financial aid for unaccompanied homeless youth, as determined by a local liaison, shelter provider, or financial aid administrator
  - Visit [https://nche.ed.gov/legis/ccraa.php](https://nche.ed.gov/legis/ccraa.php) for more information
RIGHTS AND SUPPORTS FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS

§ Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act and Head Start Act
- Requirement to conduct targeted outreach to homeless families and collaborate with providers of services to homeless families
- Prioritization for services for homeless children and their families
- Grace period for complying with records requirements
- Additional supports (year-long eligibility for services, etc.)


SPEAKING EACH OTHER’S LANGUAGE

§ Most ED and HHS programs use the definition of homeless children and youth established in the education subtitle of the McKinney-Vento Act

§ The McKinney-Vento definition is broader than the HUD definition and includes children and youth:
  - Sharing the housing of other persons, due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
  - Living in motels or hotels due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations, regardless of who pays for the motel or hotel

§ Visit https://nche.ed.gov/legis/mv-def.php for more information
STRATEGIES AND ACTION STEPS

1. Reach out to your State Coordinator and/or local liaison; find SC contact information at
   https://nche.ed.gov/states/state_resources.php

2. Include education representation in your local CoC planning and implementation efforts, including coordinated entry

3. Contact me for more information and/or for a “warm hand-off” to your state or local education partner (Christina Dukes, Federal Liaison, NCHE, cdukes@serve.org)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)
  http://nche.ed.gov

- National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY)
  http://www.naehcy.org

- SchoolHouse Connection
  http://schoolhouseconnection.org/