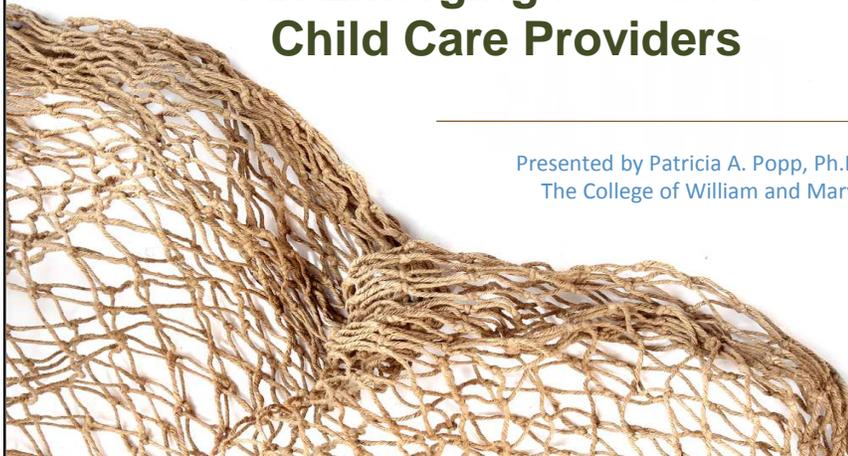


Reaching and Serving Children Experiencing Homelessness: An Emerging Focus for Child Care Providers



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EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH
Virginia Department of Education
Coordinated by the College of William and Mary

- Who is considered homeless?
- How many children are there?
- What can we do?
 - For school-age siblings?
 - For the infants and toddlers?
 - For their families?
- Tips and resources for child care providers



How frequently do you work with families experiencing homelessness?

- a. Never
- b. Seldom
- c. Occasionally
- d. Frequently



Poverty & Special Needs

- *“Poverty and its attendant stressors have the potential to shape the neurobiology of the developing child in powerful ways...”*
(Duncan, Ziol-guest, Kalil, 2010)

- Experiences build brain architecture
 - Connections and pruning



Risk Factors

- Housing
- Inconsistent and inadequate health care
- Inadequate nutrition
- Adolescent mothers
- Disrupted or limited family support
- Emotional stress or depression
- LGBTQ+



Homeless and Special Needs

“Compared to middle class peers and low-income children who are housed, “young homeless children experience more developmental delays, emotional problems such as anxiety and depression, and behavior issues.”

— Education Law Center, 2010



When children experience 6-7 risk factors, what is the chance of development delay?

- a. 25 – 50%
- b. 50 – 75%
- c. 75 – 85%
- d. 90 – 100%



Homelessness and Child Care

- Families face greater barriers to access:
 - Lack of documentation/enrollment requirements
 - High rates of mobility
 - Lack of transportation
 - “Invisibility” in communities; lack of awareness
- Compared to other poor families:
 - Less likely to receive gov’t subsidies for child care
 - More likely to have unreliable child care
 - Less likely to access center-based care
 - More likely to be forced to leave jobs or school due to lack of child care

Requirements in the CCDBG Act

- Procedures to permit enrollment of children experiencing homelessness prior to completion of all required documentation (including grace periods for compliance with immunization and other health and safety requirements).
- Training and technical assistance on identifying and serving homeless families.
- Specific outreach to families experiencing homelessness.
- Coordination with programs working with children experiencing homelessness.
- Lead Agencies to collect and report whether a CCDF family is experiencing homelessness.

The Final Rule:

- Defines homeless to be consistent with the definition in section 725 of Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act
- Clarifies that children experiencing homelessness shall be given priority for services.
- Requires Lead Agencies to coordinate with other relevant agencies to help families receiving services during a grace period comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements.
- Specifies that grace period shall be established in consultation with appropriate health agency.

WHO IS HOMELESS?

- McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
 - ESEA, now ESSA, Title IX, Part A aka “MV”
- Same definition referenced in
 - IDEA 2004
 - Child Nutrition Act
 - Head Start Act
 - Higher Education Act
 - CCDBG Act



Defining homelessness

An individual who lacks a ***fixed, regular, and adequate*** nighttime residence, including children and youth:

- ***sharing housing*** due to loss of housing or economic hardship
- living in ***motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds*** due to lack of alternative adequate housing
- living in emergency or ***transitional housing***

Including children and youth :

- abandoned in hospitals
- ~~awaiting foster care~~
- having a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, regular sleeping accommodations



- living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations
- *migratory students* meeting the description
- *unaccompanied youth* meeting the description



How eligibility is determined:
https://nche.ed.gov/ibt/sc_eligibility.php

Homeless or NOT Homeless

Check the box with the correct answer

		Homeless	NOT Homeless
In a shelter	▶	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In a motel after an eviction	▶	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Living with grandparents to save money for a house down payment	▶	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In a motel while house is renovated	▶	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Living with aunt following a foreclosure	▶	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In an overcrowded trailer with 6 children	▶	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Now that you know...

Raise your hand if you have served a family experiencing homelessness in the last year

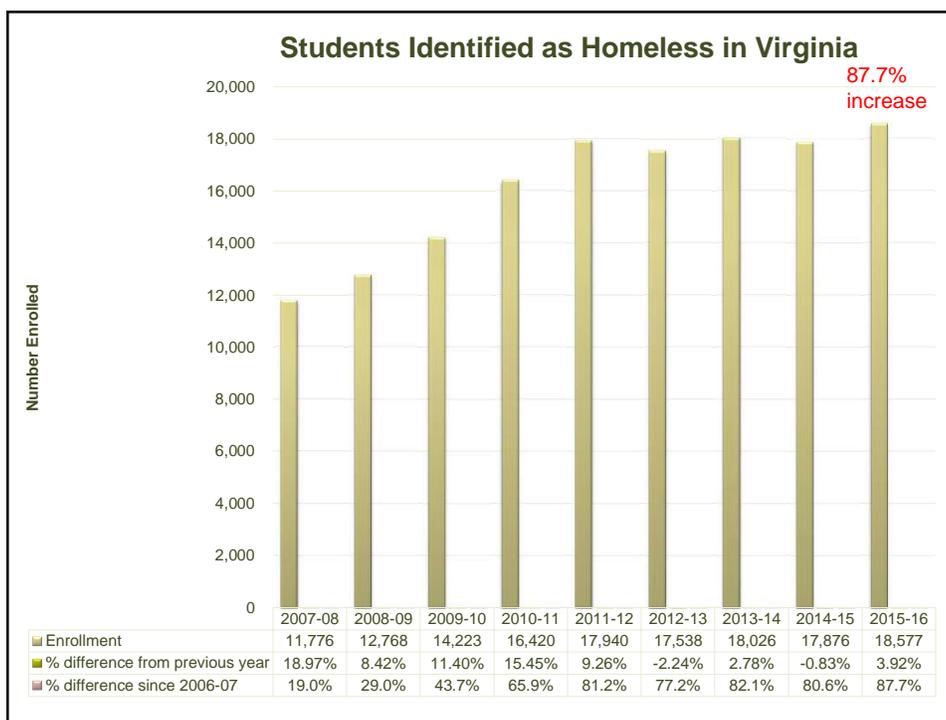


Children Experiencing Homelessness

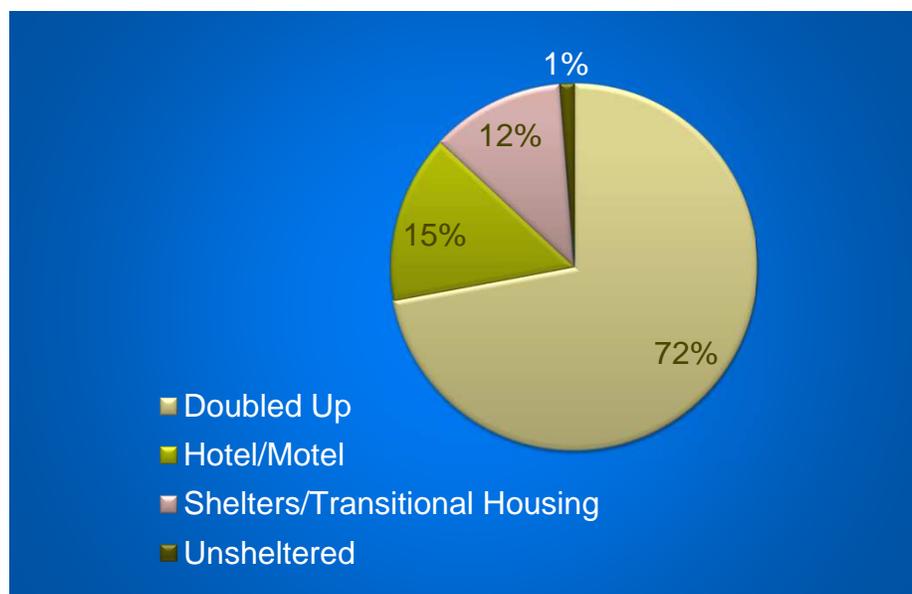
- One in 30 children (NCFH, 2014)
- 1.26 million in SY 2014-2015 (USED, 2016)
- *Families with young children are the fastest growing subgroup*



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Virginia 2015-16 Initial Primary Nighttime Residence



According to the Administration for Children and Families:

- Over one million children under six were estimated to have experienced homelessness in 2013-2014



Young Children Experiencing Homelessness, Virginia 2013-14

- 48% of children served by emergency homeless shelters under age five. (1978 of 4108)
- CCHCP served 222 children, half under 4
- Head Start served 854 children
- Virginia school divisions enrolled 487 students (3 – 5 not K)
- Virginia subgrant divisions served
 - 284 birth to age 2
 - 392 ages 3 to 5 (not K)

McKinney-Vento EHCY Requirements

- Appoint a local homeless education liaison in every school division
- For Virginia liaisons, visit: www.wm.edu/hope



EHCY Requirements



- Proactive outreach to identify students
- Maintain student enrollment in the *school of origin* when feasible and in the student's best interest
 - Includes transportation
 - Even across school division lines
- OR
- Enroll students *immediately* in local school

**Identify, enroll, and
keep the student enrolled!**

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Implementation Challenges & Promising Practices





*Tips for discussing/
identifying*

- Avoid using “homeless”
- Focus on temporary nature of housing/being in transition
- Use a residency questionnaire
- Connect with MV liaison to arrange referrals

Sample Residency Questions

- Are you living with family or friends due to economic hardship or loss of housing?
- Are you living in a hotel/motel due to the lack of an adequate alternative?
- Are you living in a shelter or transitional housing?
- Are you living in your car or other setting not intended for people?



Parent Pak

- Sturdy folder
- McKinney-Vento rights and state resources
- Developmental wheel
- Children's book



Lack of Space



- Invite to socialization activities
- Provide books or toys
- Home visiting when doubled up or shelter space are inappropriate

Mobility and lack of notice

- Build trust
- Have other contacts on file – release of information
- Recognize fear to share what basics are not available



Important Partners

- Your local MV liaison(s)
- Early Intervention and Early Childhood Education Programs
- HUD Continuum of Care (CoC)

- Project HOPE-Virginia
- Child Care for Homeless Children Program grantees

Others?

Additional ideas to explore

- Illinois
 - Model identification on school processes
 - Ensure MV liaisons have training to reach child care providers and can provide outreach and training
- South Carolina
 - Reserving child care vouchers for families experiencing homelessness to be distributed by MV liaisons and CoCs

Helpful Websites

- ACF: Expanding Early Care and Education for Homeless Children
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ecd/expanding-early-care-and-education-for-homeless-children>
- Project HOPE-VA –
www.wm.edu/hope
- NCHE –
<http://nche.ed.gov>
- NAEHCY –
www.naehcy.org
- SchoolHouse Connection –
<http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/>





***“HOME”* work**

- Get to know your homeless liaison(s)
- Build relationships with shelters in your community
- Look for ways to share the story
- Others??

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