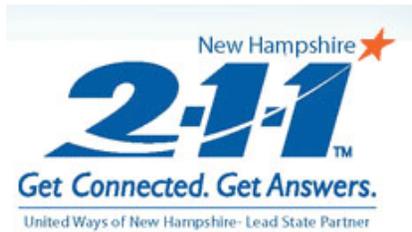


McKinney-Vento Liaison Roles & Responsibilities

Each school district must appoint a McKinney-Vento Liaison who's responsibility it is to:

- **Identify homeless children and youth;** Liaisons should develop community relations, including but not limited to shelters, transitional housing organizations, local discount motels/hotels, local police departments and recreation departments to assist in identifying homeless students.
- **Help families and unaccompanied youth choose** and enroll in a school, after considering the families or youths' wishes, and provide them with notice of their right to appeal an enrollment decision that is contrary to their wishes.
- **Ensure the immediate enrollment** of children and youth experiencing homelessness, pending the resolution of any dispute that may arise over school enrollment or placement.
- **Assist in obtaining needed records;** help homeless children and youth who do not have immunizations, medical records, birth certificates, school records or other needed documents to obtain these.
- **Ensure that enrollment disputes are mediated** and provide information about the dispute process to parents and youth.
- **Ensure that children and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible,** including head start, even start and other public preschool programs and referrals to health care, dental, mental health and other appropriate services.
- **Inform parents and guardians** of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and provide them with meaningful opportunities to participate in that education.
- **Disseminate public notice** of educational rights.
- **Provide information about transportation services** to families and youth, and assist them in accessing transportation if necessary.
- **Provide annual awareness and sensitivity training** to all school staff, including administrators, counselors, social workers, teachers, secretaries, registrars, nurses, bus drivers, security staff, attendance officers, and federal programs staff.

(A sample PowerPoint presentation can be downloaded at http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/tr_pres/info_share.ppt)



For a comprehensive list of services available in NH utilize 2-1-1; an easy to remember phone number that connects callers, at no cost, to information about services in their community.

HOPE STARTS HERE

Statewide information and Resources for families and youth in transitional situations.
www.home4hope.com

Local Liaison

(insert contact information)

State Coordinator

Dr. Lynda Thistle Elliott
Director Homeless Education
Department of Education
101 Pleasant Street, Concord, NH 03301
603.271.3840
Lynda.ThistleElliott@doe.nh.gov



A McKinney-Vento Act Funded Publication

McKinney-Vento
101

**A Guide for McKinney-Vento
Homeless Education Liaisons
&
Service Providers**

Who is Homeless?

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act states that homeless children and youth are those that lack a **fixed, regular, and adequate** nighttime residence which includes:

- children and youths who are **sharing the housing of other persons** due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
- children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings;
- migratory children who qualify as homeless because the children are living in circumstances described above.

Unaccompanied Youth

Youth in homeless situations (as described above) who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

This includes youth who have been asked to leave their homes, been abandoned by parents/guardians, are living with friends, are 'couch surfing', or have run away from home (Even if their parents/guardians are willing to provide a home for them).

School Selection

School selection must be made according to the child's or youth's *best interest*. As changing schools significantly impedes students' academic and social progress the McKinney-Vento act seeks, to the extent feasible, to keep a homeless child or youth in the school of origin, except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of the family or unaccompanied youth.

Homeless Students Have the Right to...

- **Immediate enrollment** in school without proof of residency, birth certificate, proof of immunization, or other documents.
- **Attend school**; homeless children and youth must be given access to the same public education provided to other students.
- **Continue attending** the school in which they were enrolled when they became homeless, the school last attended, or the school closest to their temporary residence, if feasible and in the best interest of the child or youth.
- **Receive transportation** to the school they attended before they became homeless.
- **Automatic enrollment** in the free lunch program without proof of income or residency.
- **Automatic qualification** for Title I services even in schools/grades in the district without Title I.
- **Expedited assessments** for services under LEP, Migrant, Title VII and IDEA.
- **Receive all school-based services** for which they qualify.
- **Participate in all programs and activities** offered to other students, including athletics, music, clubs and other extracurricular activities.
- **Have their parents participate** in and attend school events and activities.
- **Challenge decisions** on school selection made by schools/districts through the local district dispute resolution process and access state dispute process.

Removing Barriers to Transportation

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act requires a school district to: provide or arrange transportation for homeless students to and from their school of origin at the request of the youth or family; to provide transportation for homeless students that is comparable to services provided to other students living in the attendance area; and to provide transportation for homeless students to eliminate barriers to school enrollment. Currently, the cost of transportation services must be borne by the district and cannot be supported by Title I, Part A funds.

If the student is being transported across district lines the districts must agree upon a method to apportion the cost and responsibility, or split it equally. Inter-district disputes cannot delay the immediate enrollment of children and youth in the school selected and must not interfere with a student's right to be transported under the McKinney-Vento Act. It is a district responsibility to provide transportation.

Strategies for providing transportation:

Re-route School Buses – including special education buses etc. (Districts should set up bus stops to keep students' living situations confidential, if requested by the family or youth).

Public Transportation – if public transit is available in your area the district can pay for transit passes for homeless students. For this option, make sure to include passes for a family member to accompany younger children.

Reimburse for Gas/Mileage – Districts may reimburse homeless families or youth for gas, or offer gas cards.

Use Taxi or Van Services – Districts may use taxi or van services. It is recommended that districts follow their local policy with regards to transportation services.